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Anne Hughes. July S. 1810.

# THE MOTHER:

## A POEM,

IN FIVE BOOKS.

1612
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BY MRS. WEST,

AUTHOR OF

"LETTERS TO A YOUNG MAN," &c.

"See a fond mother encircled by her children: with pious tenderness she looks around, and her soul even melts with maternal love. One she kisses on the forehead, and clasps another to her bosom. One she sets upon her knee, and finds a seat upon her foot for another. And while, by their actions, their lisping words, and asking eyes, she understands their various, numberless little wishes, to these she dispenses a look; a word to those; but whether she smiles or frowns, 'tis all in tender love."

*From the Italian of Vincenzio Da Filicaja, translated by Richardson.*

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## INTRODUCTORY SONNET.

Go, child of feeling, to the world explain
That thou wast born in care's dejected year,
Cherish'd with sighs, bedew'd with many a tear,
And nurtur'd far from pleasure's laughing train;
Nor would that flattering wizard friendship deign
Th' unwelcome birth with omens bright to cheer.
Go, and to mothers pour thy descant clear;
Mothers will surely love a mother's strain.
But, should they scorn thee, shew them thou canst bear
Neglect with conscious dignity serene;
And silent to oblivion's cave repair,
Where sit thy sisters of poetic sheen,
Waiting till fashion lead them forth to day.
Green from the poet's ashes springs the bay.

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# THE MOTHER.

## ARGUMENT.

Invocation to Nature. Address to young women to be careful in their conjugal choice. Licentious, irreligious men make bad fathers. A coxcomb described in low life. Considered as the father of a family. Misfortune of having a spendthrift-husband, or an illiterate, covetous one. Not to expect a faultless character. Misery of communicating hereditary diseases to children. Marriage requires fortitude and patience. Birth of a first-born child. Its supposed address to its mother. Transport of the parents; yet fear is blended with joy. Its baptism. Attention of the mother to the infant's bodily wants and diseases. Death of a young child. Blameable grief of the mother. The sorrows and cares of her whose family increases beyond her means of supporting it. Advantages of a hardy education and early difficulties. The wealthy enjoined not to make their children selfish, or vain, or fastidious. The aspect of the times requires generosity and fortitude. Danger of Britain. State of European sovereigns. Sweden. Emigration of the Braganza family.

THE

# MOTHER.

## BOOK I.

## INFANCY.

I SING the mother's duties, joys, and cares.
Ye matrons of the British isles! who best
Deserve that name, protect the votive song!
And thou, all powerful Nature! at whose shrine,
Hung by simplicity with offerings chaste,
The wise and virtuous bend, give to the strain
That paints thee, in thy best and holiest form,
Full inspiration! grant it strength to rise,
Pathos to melt, persuasion to subdue,
And grace to charm. Hence every theme profane;

All that is gross, fallacious, or absurd,
All that vain fashion's votaries prefer
To thy behests; all that philosophy
Falsely so call'd, the idol of the age,
In maniac day-dreams tells her worshippers.
Nor let it less avoid the narrow aims
Of sordid souls, who, by capricious whim,
Or envious pride, or partial spleen abus'd,
Forget the mother in the bigot's name.
Far from such themes my varying song revolts
Indignant, and far other audience claims.

And ye, fair maids! thron'd in the early pride
Of beauty's reign, fly not alarm'd: my lay
Courts the chaste ears of those who wish to lead
Their willing captives to the honour'd shrine
Of life-endearing Hymen. Ev'n to you
Th' unborn maternal passion pleads to check
The pride of levity, the rash resolve
Of doting, headstrong, eye-directed love.

Is there among your train a youth whose arts
Triumph'd o'er virgin fame; who mocks at faith
Divine and human; who, with boastful air,
Recounts his orgies to the bestial powers,
Bacchus, or Paphian Venus? Tho' his form
Vie with Adonis, tho' in wealth he seem
First born of Plutus, and in fame excel
Alcmena's son, reject his baleful vows.
Give not your future progeny a sire
Whose deeds shall soil the gloss of youthful hope,
Or chill with deadly damps the ardent glow
Of generous emulation. Spare your heart
The pang it must endure, when the apt child
Turns o'er the sacred page, and weeping sees
Its father rank'd in Belial's cursed train,
Or Baal's slave, at enmity with heav'n.
Amid the haunts of guileless infancy,
Sacred to truth, can ye assume disguise
To gloss the crimes your intercessive prayers
Daily bewail? Or bid th' ingenuous boy,

Panting with virtuous energy, divide
The sinner from the parent? Modest, fair
And innocent, your lovely daughters bloom.
Must they, with blushing cheeks and wounded hearts,
Fly from the guilty licence of the man
Who gave them being; lest the voice design'd
To utter benedictions, and call down
Unction celestial, should profane their ears
With jests obscene, or vaunting blasphemies·
Satan's accursed dialect;—to God
Most impious, and most horrible to man!

Nor let the coxcomb, forward, pert, and bold,
With swing important, vesture alamode,
Half bred, half civil, half inform'd, half wise,
Uttering quaint nothings, with distorted face,
And gestures from some ouran-outang caught
Seen at a raree-show; a spurious brood,
To Britain once unknown, familiar now
To crowded cities and to rustic burghs:

Let not this prating Dapper-wit, who gibes
At courts and camps, yet parodies their crimes,
Win wondering Cicely from blunt Colin Clout,
The honest son of pure simplicity,
Attractive even in his rustic garb.
No: let her call Audrey and Blowsibel
To strip the jackdaw of his plumes, and toss
His self-invested greatness to the wind.

Still be Narcissus, self-adorer, woo'd
By Echo's empty voice: at Hymen's shrine
He is no seemly votary. View, ye fair,
The shallow coxcomb, by some chance perverse,
In the connubial or paternal chair
Uncouthly seated. Quaint, disgustful, strange,
The creature looks: his babes are squalling brats,
His servants scoundrels, and his wife a fool.
Nothing is right, save his own perfect self,
That paragon of wisdom! For the grin
That strains his jaws in public, yields at home

To sour dictatorship and sov'reign rule,
Worse than a Turkish Bassa. Cold his heart,
Cold as the frigid arctic, mid the reign
Of Pisces, to all human weal or woe,
Save his own precious person. Does the rheum
Affect his teeth? Has the tyrannic gout,
That keen remembrancer of idleness,
Enslav'd his finger? Vassal woman, come!
Clothe every door with woollen garniture;
Chain every foot, but that which flies to tend
Th' important sufferer; nor let a sound
Disturb the ceaseless knell of his complaints,
Or bid him recollect, beside himself,
The world has living creature. Chiefly bind
Yon healthful boy, impatient to bestride
His wooden hobby; to disturb papa
Is worse than sacrilege: and let the nurse
Convey the unfed infant from thine arms;
For thou must watch the slumbers of a brat
More wayward and less hopeful. Such the scenes

That early wait thy inauspicious bond ;
To be succeeded by more dol'rous days,
When time shall ripen an unsightly brood
Of untrain'd daughters and neglected sons,
Vulgar and gaunt in manners and in mien;
Mute in the haunts of meet society,
From awkward shame, or folly ever proud,
Yet noisy with the house-maid and the groom ;
Retorting hatred, scorn, and obloquy
On him whose selfish bosom never knew
A father's duty, and shall never feel
A father's transport or a father's hope.

" Yet," cries th' enamour'd maid, " Hilario view,
And bless the happy virgin whom he woos
With honourable vows. No coxcomb cold,
The social feelings flourish in his heart
As in their proper soil. He, loathing, shuns
The harlot's haunts, nor does the drunkard's bowl
Tempt his abstemious lips. No loud complaints

Of virgin-innocence despoil'd invade
His peaceful visions. Of the purer charms,
Attractive science, and ingenious art,
A fervent worshipper; the painter's friend,
The poet's theme and patron; the sure aid
Of bare sufficiency, and clamorous want.
Generous, munificent, unique in taste,
Matchless in splendor, hospitable, frank,
The glory of society, the boast
Of numerous friends, for all who know him love,
And all affirm, chill prudence never clos'd
His ever bounteous hand." Rash maid! forbear
Thy praise, misplac'd; or give him but thy praise;
Not the full coffers and luxuriant meads
Thy frugal sire bequeath'd thee; nor augment
A spendthrift's vanity; nor swell the brood
Of ravening crows, who on his carrion wealth
Banquet voracious, and with scream'd applause
Deafen the wasteful Timon they despoil:
So shall no daughters portionless, no sons

Trick'd of their rich inheritance, and thrown
Poor outcasts on a cold upbraiding world,
Their mother's folly curse; who madly launch'd
On the vast ocean of connubial care,
Discretion's guiding compass left on shore.

Does the blithe spinster, weary of control,
Stern contradiction, never-ending tasks,
And sway maternal, with a Cato's pride
Determine to be free? Wise that resolve:
Yet seek not freedom from the brutal hand
Of Lubin, rich Camacho's darling son,
The tyrant of his family, the scourge
Of his indulgent mother. Long desir'd,
While many a female infant came unwish'd,
The boy at length was born: the idol boy,
Too precious to be early school'd, yet train'd
To know and value what should last be taught
And least esteem'd, his heirship to the mine,
The meadow, and the woodlands, and his power

To awe his dowerless sisters with his frowns.
O happier far the rose that blooms and dies
" In peaceful singleness," than that remov'd
To the cold bosom of the niggard dolt,
Illiterate, cruel, clamorous, and stern;
Foe to each liberal thought, and every joy
Of temperate comfort: Mammon his sole God;
Most arrogant in vulgar ignorance;
Yet scouts he knowledge with opprobrious taunts,
And with the censures due to surly pride
Asperses bland politeness. Shun, ye fair!
A fate like wandering Sindbad's, buried quick
With his dead spouse. O shun this sepulture
Of generous feeling, this perpetual death
Of joy, improvement, comfort, and repose!

" How far proceeds the interdicting muse?"
Inquires Nerina, smiling: " Must we sit
Waiting in our bowers till men turn angels,
Watching our silkworms, toying with our cats,

Or lonely trilling the piano-notes
Of " none will come to marry me ?" Beware :
Nor, in thy wanton scorn, obliquely cast
Reproach on Britons. Are they misers all,
Spendthrifts, or sceptic-libertines, or fools ?
Let angel Candour o'er infirmity
Drop her white veil in mercy ; or, more oft,
Let error in the self-accusing heart
Of kindred error kind compassion meet,
And sufferance : nor, till faultless grown, expect
From Araby, Utopia, or the moon,
A phœnix-man to build for thee a nest
Of deathless odours, and all-healing balms ;
There, like the azure halcyon, bid thee brood
O'er love eternal and perpetual joy.
Only in haunts of fable or of song
Does perfect man reside ; on earth he walks
By folly and infirmity pursu'd.
Tho' on his heav'n-ward journey they retard
The dubious wanderer, fear not thou to join

A brother-pilgrim, who with heart sincere
Directs his course to Canaan. If he err,
He will retrace his steps, and onward speed
More zealous from transgression. Yet, ere love
Guides thy acceptance, give not error's name
To brutal appetites or devilish crimes.
These are not human weaknesses: these leave
A stain indelible, th' infernal scar
Of daring guilt, stubborn, and fix'd in ill.

Nor, tho' infirmity demands thy tear
Compassion, and thy ready arm to aid
His tottering steps, let not the blooming nymph
In life's fair prime for life's long partner choose
One faint and wayward, through the festering wounds
Of hopeless anguish; chief, when the deep taint
Fouls the polluted blood, and on the germ
Of infant beauty pours the mildew-blast
Of pale disease, or stains the glossy skin
With purple scrofula, or leprous scale;

Or, with contractions, numbs th' expanding limbs
Just shooting into vigour; or with clouds
Impervious, shrouds the intellectual beam,
And leaves man human only in his form.

From the sad ministry of blank despair,
From the sharp pangs of unavailing love,
From the reproachful scorpions of remorse,
Ye future mothers! save your hearts, and spare
Weak unresisting innocence those pains
Which the wise sybil Foresight's prescient glance
Discerns, scarce veil'd by time's thin flecker'd clouds.
Enough of long protracted watchings, hours
Of sad solicitude, and tender aids
Man's feeble race require. Come then, ye fair!
To Hymen's shrine, and in your spousal train
Bring Fortitude and Patience. Poesy
Mispaints the nuptial god. His saffron vest,
Like the cameleon, changes oft its hues;
And on his radiant torch there sometimes hang

Turbid or gloomy vapours. In his crown
Of roses lurks unseen, the rankling thorn;
And oft the deadly aconite enwreaths
His sacrificial goblet: omen dire!
Ah! could my feeble voice from rural glens
To courts and cities sound, with power to call
Thy daughters, Folly! from the late carouse
Of Comus, or the cumbrous toils of state,
Dangerous to health and fame; but dangerous most
To fragile life, when Nature wisely bids
Th' expectant mother to the quiet haunts
Of ease and privacy, and social love;
When pleasing, anxious, pensive cares and pains,
Wishes and sad presages, prayers and hopes,
Preluding terrors, clog the tedious hours
Of parturition, and with force combin'd
Shake the sad matron, writhing in the grasp
Of agonies most keen; till the shrill cry
Of new-born life first wakens in her soul
Maternal tenderness. A pang succeeds,

Sharp as the throes of pain; her clasp'd hands drop;—
O'er her flush'd cheek a dying paleness falls,
Like snow on the mezereon's crimson buds.
Thin visions float before her closing eyes;
On her dull'd ear imperfect murmurs ring;
Quick and unequal beats her heart.—"She faints!"
Th' assistants cry, as they with pungent salts
Chafe her cold, dewy temples. Yet, forbear,
Ministring friends; for nature has at hand
Restorative more potent. Hark again
Those infant wailings, seem they not to say,
"Revive, my mother!—lo! thy feeble babe,
Shivering and helpless, shrinking from the weight
Of new existence, in thy bosom seeks
Its best protection. Who but thou canst brace
My nerveless limbs, or bid my imperfect sense
Expand to thought or virtue. O revive
To duties nobler than the painted gaudes
That busy idle beauty: to delights
Purer than e'er the midnight gala gave.

Here dread no rival. Here no wayward swain
Shall mock thy blandishments. Give me the hours
That dissipation claims: my smiles, the shout
Of infantine delight, my rosy charms
Unfolding fast, reason's enchanting dawn
Rip'ning to thought; these are thy present meed;
Thy future, grateful duty; when thine age,
Tottering and helpless in the vale of years,
Shall ask the succour of an arm by thee
Nurtur'd to manly vigour, and a heart
Affectionately zealous by thy care
With early virtues sown, and bearing then
Fruit of most precious growth a thousand fold."

Ye, in whose bosoms warm affection blends
With calm composure, blessed compound, say,
Is there a sight that wakes in gentle hearts
More exquisite delight than to behold
The joyful mother, with impatient love,
Receive her first-born child, and lift to heav'n

Eyes where devotion, thankfulness, and awe
Blend their expressive rays; then to its sire,
With smiles, commend the sacred pledge, and weep
Her gratulations? Yet, with chast'ned joy,
Exulting pair, embrace the dubious boon—
Perchance a trial of your faith and strength
And confidence in heav'n; perchance a scourge
Of rebel-inclinations, craving cares,
Earthly and carnal passions, selfish aims
That should spring upward on the vaulting wings
Of holy expectation, patient, calm
And self-devoting; or, perhaps, this babe,
Helpless and petulant, puling and weak,
May prove the bulwark of your falling house,
Your guide, your refuge from injurious foes,
Your ornament, your glory. On the breast
Of Agrippina infant-Nero lay
A hopeful boy: in the gymnastic sports,
The circus, and the forum, she beheld
The peerless youth, and gloried in her son;

Nor saw in him the matricide, ordain'd
To visit on her guilty head the crimes
Of fraud, ingratitude, and murder foul.

Amid thy daughters, Pharaoh! the least priz'd
Was she whom Solomon espous'd, and sang
In numbers more mellifluous than e'er flow'd
From Dorian pipe, or Tuscan lute; yet she,
Scorn'd by her mother, by her brethren driv'n
From Memphis' towers, among the vineyards stray'd
Till the sun scath'd her beauty, sent to chase
The foxes from the tender grape, and rear
The frail pomegranate, while the nightingale
Sang lovetales to the rose. Unknown she mourn'd,
Till he, whose kingdom from Euphrates stretch'd
To Nile, and from Palmyra to the shores
Of Ascalon, woo'd her with ample dower:
An ivory chariot, overlaid with gold,
And spearmen girt with golden mail convoy'd
The royal bride, attir'd in panoply

Most glorious, to her palace cedar-roof'd,
Blazing with Ophir's wealth, and the vast pearls
Of Ormus, while Arabia's balms perfum'd
The colonnades. There sat she long the pride
Of eastern queens; the spouse of him renown'd
In every nation and in every age,
Most fortunate, most powerful, and most wise;
Till lur'd to idol-worship by the snare
Of beauty, to uxorious dotage lov'd.

Happy the wife, who, by endearments chaste
And pure example, leads her wedded lord
To Siloa's fountain, whose pellucid rill
In youth he largely quaff'd; till, by the world
Intic'd to taste her deleterious cup,
He left the life-bestowing stream. Again,
Led by connubial and paternal love,
Like Syrian Naaman in Jordan's flood,
He seeks the healing waters and is whole.

The weeks of languishment discreetly giv n
To close retirement, see, with strength renew'd,
The christian matron, in the house of God
A fervent worshipper, fulfil the vows
Of pain and dolour, while exulting psalms
Of praise and blessing hail her. Nor alone
Seeks she the temple: there she also brings
An infant-suppliant, suing to be wash'd
In the baptismal laver, and receiv'd
Within the church's consecrated pale,
Of high peculiar privilege inscrib'd
Free denizen of heav'n: title divine!
Unalienable, save by future guilt
Of bold rebellion. Ministers of peace!
Receive these little tremblers to your arms;
And with the tenderness of Him whose name
You invocate, pronounce them meet for heav'n:
Imploring the pure Spirit so to guide
Their voyage through the troubled waves of time,
As in that harbour they at last may rest.

Thus in the christian commonwealth enroll'd
A future claimant of those glorious hopes;
Transcending thought! maternal care reverts
From the undying spirit heav'n-deriv'd,
To its frail tenement of clay earth-born,
And earth-devoted. Ev'n in early life
The never resting family of pain
Vex with allow'd hostility the race
Of rebel Adam. Instruments of good,
Tho' of infernal origin, they come,
By the sharp anguish of the suff'ring babe
To discipline the mother, and exalt
Her carnal wishes, still inclin'd to build
Her tabernacle on mount Tabor's side;
Nor, looking o'er it on th' eternal hills,
Seek a more firm foundation for her hopes.
For this her heart is often doom'd to wail;
Her beauteous scion, blasted as a plant
Pierc'd at the root by reptile vermin, droops;
Nor genial suns, nor tepid gales, nor showers

Call'd by Favonius from the balmy south,
Renew its freshness. Thus, Celina, fail'd
Thy anxious care to save the loveliest babe
Heav'n ever lent to man; whose cherub smile
Spoke the mild beauty of the happy realm
To which the infant pilgrim soon aspir'd,
Weary of suffering, to assume the crown
Of immortality. And did thy grief,
Celina, swell beyond the lawful bound
Of calm regret, which, while it deeply feels,
Endures the chastisement in meekness? Yes,
Frantic in agony thou didst accuse
Capricious Heav'n, thus early to resume
A gift so highly priz'd, so long desir'd;
Shrouding in endless gloom thy day-dreams, erst
Employ'd in painting the fair creature's fame,
Prosperity, and bliss. O most unwise
And most unhappy! Hast thou not surviv'd
To wish thy other offspring in the grave
In holy hope, like this now envied child,

Reposing. Then had thy sad heart escap'd
The mother's tortures most extreme, who lives
To every fear, but dies to every joy:
While, like accursed Cain, her guilty race
Wander, abhorr'd and dreaded through the land.

Learn then, fond woman! who art call'd to yield
An infant songster to the choir of heav'n,
Thy proper duty; or, suppose thy lot
(Once deem'd the summit of all earthly joys)
Be to attend, with never ceasing care,
A healthful numerous brood. They multiply
Beyond the means of competence. O cast
Thy care on Him who for the sparrow cares,
And rears the ostrich on Arabian sands
Left by its heedless parent. But first doff
Thy robes of state and cumbrous ornaments;
These would impede thy labours in the task
Of honourable duty; nor suspect
The neat attire of plain simplicity

Will veil a matron's sober charms. How look'd
Cornelia, splendid in the cultur'd worth
Of her renowned offspring, when she left
To Lesbia and to Glycera those gems
That would profane the chaste magnificence
Of proud maternal wealth. With these vain gaudes
Dismiss the fond desire which would renew
Expensive pleasures. Be the nursery
Thy theatre, the school thy masquerade,
The evening walk thy gala festival;
But come not to the scenes where thou shouldst reign
The priestess of instruction and of joy,
With brow austere, cold as the anchorite,
Or pale and mournful as the victim-nun
Torn from a world she idoliz'd, and doom'd
To loath'd seclusion. No, with cheerful smiles
Sauce thy plain viands, and with sweet discourse
Flavour the Spartan cup Discretion sage
(An iron-hearted virtue) bids thee use
For daily beverage: so may'st thou beguile

Thy less abstemious husband from the haunts
Of gay indulgence to thy frugal board;
Content, and gladdening with his kind regard
Thy skill and well-arrang'd economy.
Thus thrifty Eve her banquet neatly spread
For Adam and his angel-visitant,
Herbs their repast, but they convers'd of heaven.

"Preacher proceed," the pensive mother cries,
Who, nurs'd herself in elegance, requires
For her lov'd babes like comforts. "Come, and swear,
Swear by experience, solid test, that joy
Awaits on fearful, watchful parsimony.
Tho' to thy palate wines of Burgundy
May seem less grateful than the cowslip's flower
Brew'd by the cottage-dame; tho' costly cates
Arrang'd in tasteful plenty only pall
Thy coarser appetite, by choice confin'd
To simple food; tho' thou dost estimate
The woollen garb that shrouds thy limbs beyond

Thin gossamer, wov'n in the looms of Inde
And starr'd with sparkling gems; altho' thy ear,
Rustic and cold to music's charms, prefers
The artless carol of the milkmaid's song
To Catalani's strains, mov'd but to spleen
By Spagnoletti's quavers, hard to play,
And wonderful alike to see and hear;
Tho' dearer is the converse of thy boys
Than the full rout, and the fresh evening walk
Exceeds the chariot's lounge: has wealth no joys
Save the fictitious pleasures she affords
To pamper'd luxury and dreaming sloth?
Does the immortal mind, because press'd down
By care's incessant harass, higher vault,
And with more freedom through its native skies
Expatiate? Hast thou never felt a pang
When from thy door a worthy suppliant,
Or creditor unsatisfied, has turn'd
In disappointed silence? If thy breast
Feel not the gibe of vulgar affluence,

The coarse regard of ostentatious wealth,
Offensive ev'n in liberality,
Because unsoften'd by the chaste relief
Of kindness, melting at the woes she heals;
If thou canst exile bounty, fetter taste,
And bid a long farewell to letter'd ease,
Which sweetly banquets in the vacant hour;
If, or by nature callous, or by pride
Stiffen'd to fortitude, these evils fall
On thy firm heart like snow on marble, yet
Thou art a mother, vulnerable there
Where poverty wounds deepest. Hast thou seen
The goodly field of genius barren lie
A waste uncultur'd, nor the cleansing tilth
Of education, nor the golden seed
Of enterprise allow'd? Or hast thou mark'd
The prize, which justice to thy studious boy
Awarded, ravish'd by some wealthy fool,
Whose narrow soul despis'd what he purloin'd?
Or, worse than all, ev'n on the ripening cheek

Of virgin beauty hast thou look'd with dread,
Pondering the evils which the world prepares
For weak, unportion'd innocence, compell'd
To quit its parent-nest, and fly abroad
To seek subsistence in those forest-haunts
Where felon kites and murderous snares abound?"

Inquire not what this heart hath felt; enough
It is not callous, but can weep with those
"Who strive with adverse fortune to be just*;"
Their bodies delicate, their souls refin'd
To tremulous impatience. Yet be firm,
Resign not to low opulence the palm
Of pleasure or content, deserv'd alone
By liberal wealth, munificent and wise,
Pleas'd to bestow, and in bestowing blest.
Ev'n the cold grot of bare sufficiency,
If independent courage shelter there,

* Akenside.—"Of him who strives with fortune to be just."

Shall mock the gawdy palaces of ease,
And to his swoll'n and pamper'd sons oppose
Her ruddy offspring, train'd to brave the winds
Which howl'd around the rocky promontory
From whence they gaz'd at life. Skill'd to contend
With the night-riding tempest, or to stem
The boiling surges vex'd by winter's storms,
These will not shrink from puny ills; to these
Rest is not sick caprice or moody spleen,
But ecstasy and transport. Try them now
In infancy: this toy, the youthful heir
Of yon rich worldling, toss'd it from his grasp
While pouting for the moon. Give it thy child,
A rare reward for early diligence.
Is it a treasure? Yes; his glist'ning eyes,
His eager hands, his look of triumph, shew
'Twill long be precious, hoarded carefully
At night, and sought at morning; kept with art
From envious sisters, and by force withheld
From sturdy brothers, struggling for the prize,

His right, his recompence. In future life
Thus with most dear affection will he clasp
The hard-earn'd comforts of his home, the bed
Bought by assiduous watching, the repast
For which brown industry hath cater'd well;
Unlike the morsel flatter'd greatness throws
To the base sycophant it feeds and scorns.
Yet is not wealth a blessing? Wisely us'd
'Tis of the primal stamp. Come, ye who bask
In the full splendor of its fervid sun,
O come and learn to give your darling babes
The good of every station, peace, content,
Minds undebauch'd, and bodies vigorous;
Nor to the vile idolatry of self
In purse, and heart, and thought devoted all.
No bliss the narrow worldling feels, enjoys
No good; he envies the laborious hind,
Yet shrinks from exercise; his cheek is pale
To hear the students' triumphs, tho' the book
Falls from his hand; he wishes for renown,

Yet, but by superfluity of spleen,
Aims at distinction. On one little nave
Revolve his views; and all the world is blind,
Idiot or knavish, envious or unjust,
Save the led captain, or the humble friend,
Who daily strike the harp of eulogy,
Blended with calumny's loud scrannel notes,
To pay their stinted commons. Could'st thou bear
To see thy child thus hated and cajol'd,
Unknown beyond the solitary bound
Of its own mansion, and, where known, despis'd;
Spending its treasures on cameleon's food,
Its time in pompous sloth? Early dismiss
The fawning nursemaid, give the subtle groom
No ingress to young master; nor allow
The steward's children to pay servile court,
To lose at marbles, carry out the dolls,
Drag the unwieldy coach, and play the jack
At every game, while thy young tyrants scorn
Participation; by prescriptive right

Enthron'd supreme, empow'r'd to choose the sport,
And eat the feast they deign not to prepare.

Soon are the haughty habits of command,
And self-esteem, and scorn, acquir'd, which long
And painful discipline can scarce subdue.
But if of milder stamp, thy hopes aspire
To form the courtly finish'd gentleman
And bland accomplish'd dame, expert in all
That bears the stamp of fashion, in each grace,
That with insinuating sweetness steals
The flatter'd spirit, and from self-esteem
Commands the praise it gives—bound not thy views
To suavity, but to smooth manners join
A heart as gentle, steel'd by virtues firm;
For gentleness and firmness may be bound
In one fair chaplet, like the bay and rose.

While the young plastic mind from thee receives
Its first impression, studiously imprint

The stamp of fortitude, and wisely raze
Fastidious niceness, feeling falsely nam'd;
Lydian and British manners will not blend.
Thou dost not nurse some feeble Sybarite,
Pain'd by a crumpled rose-leaf, and annoy'd
To madness by a choir of nightingales
Chaunting their loves to Cynthia. Other arts
Thy sons must learn than wanton serenade,
Or the trim curvets of the agile dance,
With all the soft voluptuousness that waits
On pamper'd appetite. No more on earth
Reigns fair Astrea, nor has Gloriane
Sent forth her knights to rid th' oppressed world
Of giants, Saracens, and paynims proud;
Treason, rape, murder, sacrilege, and spoil,
Ate's foul offspring, ravage now the plains
Of desolated Europe. Th' iron age
Calls for a heart like adamant, and nerves
Compact as steel; courage alike prepar'd
To beard gaunt danger in the files of war,

Or bide the stings of sharp calamity
With unrepining sufferance. Generous zeal,
Mindless of self, yet burning to unchain
The captives of oppression, or to guard
Its menac'd country. Firm integrity,
A blunt unvarnish'd man, of antique guise,
Who by the threat'ning sword or proffer'd bribe
Alike unmov'd, holds on his steady course
In the plain path direct. War now assumes
A different character than when she call'd
The sons of Albion from unmenac'd homes
To high encounters; when with mighty deeds
Of distant heroes her loud trumpet spoke
Proud invitations to the field of fame.
No Harry Monmouth now to Percy sends
His glove in gallant courtesy, a call
To great achievements and renown'd exploits,
The sport of youthful warriors. Now no more
The flower of chivalry, the Muse's pride,
Illustrious Surrey, rides from joust to joust,

Waving the purfled scarf of Geraldine,
And calling other lovers to contend
With him in arts and arms. On Gallia's throne
No generous Francis sits, nor brave Navarre,
Who on the horrent brow of combat stamp'd
Honour and courtesy, and strict regard
To faith implied or plighted. These compell'd
Victory to drop her bloody mail, and stoop
To raise the vanquish'd. Glory was their aim,
Not mean revenge, the curse of baser minds,
Low-born, and giddy with prosperity,
More suited to acquire than just to use
Dominion absolute. O menac'd isle!
Last refuge of integrity and worth,
To which religion, liberty, and peace
Have flown as to an ark, riding secure
Amid a world of waters; must thou too
Sink in the deluge that hath overwhelm'd
Order and law, and from their base pluck'd up
Empires and states, the elder born of time,

Whelming the bright records of ancient fame,
Habits and hopes, in the oblivious *Now*
Of power invincible. The traveller
Through Europe journeys, as along the wilds
Of Samoieda, or Canadian wastes,
And asks, what wandering tribe inhabits here?

Reigns a Nassau in Belgium? That brave race
Redeem'd from Spanish tyranny the soil
Of freedom and of commerce with their blood.
Does Florence, art's emporium, grateful still,
Prefer her Medici, who wreath'd her brow
With flowers of taste, as beauteous as the flowers
Which fringe her silver Arno? Do the sons
Of great Sobieski, champion of the cross,
Grac'd with the regal honours they deserve,
Unite the Poles intractable, and rule
From Oder's bank to Nieper's rapid surge?
Still do Helvetia's pastoral vales and rocks,
High pil'd in bold sublimity, defend

The lov'd asylum dear to simple taste,
And virtuous independence? Do those wilds
At solemn festivals still echoing name
The patriotic band, who in their breasts
Buried invading Austria's broken spear,
And dying triumph'd? No: of past renown
Be silent, Europe! Tremble now to praise
Thy former worthies, and instruct thy tongue
(Impatient to pronounce the bitter curse
Of agoniz'd despair) in the gross strain
Of eulogy, while numbering o'er thy scroll
Of upstart puppies and degraded kings,
Slaves like thyself. But look not to the north,
Where brave Gustavus on his native ice
The Swedish standard plants. Firm, bold, sublime,
As are his guardian mountains, he sustains
Dishonour'd Russia's pillage, and invokes
Justice, and truth, and courage to defend
Their own Dalecarlia. Freedom there shall reign,
Or there her champion die, rather than brook

Chains from the Corsican, altho' they sit
Like jewell'd collars on imperial slaves:
Speed, sovereign Lord of earth, his righteous war!

Nor look, ye royal slaves (to look were death,
Or self reproach more bitter), where yon sails
Stretch o'er th' Atlantic. There Braganza's heir
Conducts the wreck of Lusitania's state
From shores he could not save, yet scorn'd to rule
A tributary vassal. He protects
His aged mother, and a helpless band
Of women and of infants, who with tears
Lament the world they leave, and, trembling, see
The new one they explore in verdant slopes,
Thick interspers'd with foliage, rising slow
From the vast ocean, on whose boiling surge
They fear'd to launch. The pensive prince there goes,
As erst the pious Dardan* scap'd from Troy,
Bearing his dearest ties and household gods,

* Æneas.

To found an empire where marauding France
Shall never lead her hordes;—to wear a crown
Of independence, such as kings should wear;
And in Bahia's wide savannahs raise
A freeborn race, who never shall deplore
Algarva's vines, or Coimbra's orange groves
To ravage yielded, while one stern decree
Blots from the earth wrong'd Lusitania's name,
Or chains her a blind captive to those states
Whose tyrant yoke she burst in happier times.

And must thou too, native Albion, become
Thus lost, thus nameless, in the vortex vast
Of universal rule ingulph'd, while all
Thy monuments of glory pass away
Like a poor maniac's dreams; thy sons' renown,
The virtue of thy daughters? The sad Muse
Bends on her harp, and, silent, bodes a change
Vast, dolorous, fatal to her lofty song.

# RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

## ARGUMENT.

Mothers are exhorted to infuse a patriotic spirit into their sons, and to train their daughters in humility and benevolence. They are warned against partiality to one child. Indulged children are generally disastrous or wicked. A forward girl contrasted with one who has been too much subdued or neglected. A child of reason described. Religious instruction the best means of correcting the faults of the human heart. Portrait of a poor woman instructing her children. Address to mothers in affluence, to extend their love and care for their children to their immortal part. Beauty of early piety. A caution not to be too much elated by early proficiency, nor to esteem modesty dulness. Samuel's mistake concerning which of the sons of Jesse God had selected to rule Israel. David's piety and submission to the divine will. Influence of religious principle in recalling a sinner. Mothers are exhorted to pray for their children. The great change predicted by prophecy appears to be commencing in the world. Mothers are exhorted not to alarm their fancy by useless speculations, but so to educate their children, that whatever be the event they may be safe under the divine protection.

## BOOK II.

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

WAK'D from her trance of woe, the Muse again
Resumes her song. Ye British matrons! rise
With equal firmness, yet with happier hopes
Than Carthaginian mothers, when they rent
Their glossy locks, and into bow-strings twin'd
The bright redundance, late their grace and pride
In days of freedom. These, with breasts unarm'd,
Amid the flight of missile spears and darts,
Tore their fair robes to staunch the bleeding wounds
Of husbands, sons, and fathers. Yet tho' He,
Whose love is safety, still around this isle
Encamps his host invincible, brigades
Of angels, who with shields of adamant
Repel the shafts of malice, rage, and pride,

Hurl'd by the enemy, upon whose head,
And on the heads of his blind worshippers,
The vial of destruction gradual pours
In retribution; still, ye British dames,
Yours is an arduous task, to train your babes
So meetly, that the congregated sins
Of an offending people may not move
Our heavenly Friend in anger to withdraw
His aid, who best, who only, can preserve.

Say to your sons, "Be brave, be wise, be firm:
Scorn the low ends of party, and with pride
(For pride sometimes is virtue) spurn the bait
Of faction, tempting to a precipice
That beetles o'er the gulph of infamy.
Look to the common weal; all weal in that
Must be absorb'd; for in the nation's fall
Thy fair possessions, titles, honours, hopes,
Must sink. Thou wouldst not live to be the slave
Of France, to execute her foul decrees

On thine own countrymen, the race of those
Who bled in battle for thine ancestors.
These tax their hard-earn'd modicum, till life
Complains of scant support, to build a fence
Around thy woods, thy villas, and thy farms.
Of old, in times less perilous, thy sires,
Girded in iron mail, disdain'd repose;
While at the summons of their bugle-horn
The hardy peasantry and yeomen bold,
Bred on their own domains, alike impell'd
By courage and affection, eager rush'd
To the emblazon'd standard of their chief,
Content with him to triumph or to die.
Shall sloth or dissipation hold thee back
From their example? Quit the crowded town,
Too young to guide the senate, or to wield
The vast machine of government; disdain
To bend the venal instrument of power,
To sport a courtly summer fly, or, worse,
To vex the long debate with crude conceits:

Far other task thine age, thy rank, thy wealth,
Thy talents, and thy fame require. Go stand
On yon white cliffs in military pomp
Of preparation: back to th' invader hurl
Defiance. Or, if bolder views delight
Thy ardent spirit—sink not, doting heart,
With this embrace I yield thee—go and lead
From Britain's shores her armies formidable,
Bearing not menace vain, but potent war."

Then to your weeping daughters turn, and say,
" This is no time for sloth. Prepare the scarf,
Pride of the chieftain; weave the warm attire
For the brave soldier, who unshrouded lies
On the damp earth, and steals a short repose
From weariness extreme, amid the din
Of danger, or the smart of wounds. Assist
His teeming wife, left lonely to endure
Sorrow, and want, and misery. Instruct
His children; train them to be soldiers too,

Soldiers of God and Britain. At the shrine
Of public virtue offer up the gaudes
Of vain expense; nor breathe one guilty sigh
For pleasures circumscrib'd, delights withheld,
And wishes incompatible with claims
Of paramount import. Learn also (ere
Compell'd by changeful fortune to display
The virtues of an humbler state) the arts
Of useful duty, and of frugal care;
And still, with gentle courtesy, require
The state and service affluence receives
From those her equals in a future world;
Perchance in this—for mutability
Ever on earth triumphant, now more loud,
Calls on the idle, frivolous, and vain,
To mark the revolutions of her wheel,
Which topples down hereditary rank,
And raises base-born meanness to the clouds."

Nor yet content with precept, patient form,

By firm example and restrictions wise,
Early begun and patiently pursu'd,
What these stern times require, an upright mind:
First school thyself, nip in thy heart the germ
Of preference; 'twill cover all the soil,
Prolific as the Indian fig, whose shade
Conceals a caravan. Nor quicker shoots
The tall banana, when the torrent rains
Have drench'd some tropic-region, parch'd and bare,
Tho' with redundant vegetable powers
Indu'd, than in the mother's doting heart
Springs the foul creeper, rank partiality;
Foul, when impregnating the noxious blasts
Of envy, on a neighbouring plant it sheds
Mildew and gnawing canker; but most foul,
When, with inebriating fumes, it clouds
Maternal justice, robing in the guise
Of supernatural worth one idol child,
Or from some weeping innocent purloins
Its dower of equal love. Rise, prescient Muse!

Rend time's dark mantle, and to folly shew
Years of reproach, of sorrow, and of shame,
Fulfilling slow their melancholy round,
And scourging her with scorpions. Shew the god
Of her fond dotage, writh'd by torturing pain
Owning its mortal lineage, while it sinks
To an untimely grave, and there inhumes
Her peace, her hope. Or, shew it as distain'd
By stubborn guilt, glorying in infamy,
Nursing the poisonous asp ingratitude
To sting a mother's heart. Such bitter fruits
Spring from indulgence; bodies rack'd with pain
By early gluttony, by numbing sloth
Contracted into joyless lassitude;
Or to thy vigils, Dissipation, forc'd
An infant-worshipper, at thy gay shrine
Inhaling atrophy, or phthisis pale,
Mortal as the feign'd upas, and more vast
Their desolation, which no skilful son
Of Peon can arrest, no healing plant

Med'cine, no charm subdue: death to the joys
Of many a parent, many a lover; death
To the fair blossom of expanding worth.

Or, grant the vigorous well-knit frame resists
These strong assailments, dread that fiercer ill,
An uncorrected mind; passions indulg'd
To mad extravagance; manners untrain'd
To courtesy or tenderness; contempt
Of others; love of self; obstinate pride.
Wedded to swart and purblind ignorance,
A wayward witch, who throws her random shafts
At virtue and at knowledge. Such thy boy:
Thy girl a forward vixen, pertly train'd
To pout or ogle, or, with mimic state
To glide around the room a lady Bell
In birth-day pomp, complaining that she fears
Her beauty is too killing. Does she sing
To please the captain? Does the moppet tell
She danc'd with a young lord, and won his heart?

Gives she prompt answers? Does she never run
To hide her blushes in her mother's arms,
Oppress'd by observation or by praise?
And shall this babe-coquette at the dessert
Preside sole orator, affront each guest,
Banish improving converse, carve the ice,
Engross the sweetmeats, and, with copious draughts,
Quaff flattery's deleterious cup? Away!
Give me the rod and scourge the brat to school.

But from yon lonely corner lead to view
That poor, neglected girl, esteem'd a dolt.
Mamma indeed objects, "'Tis awkward, plain,
Inelegant, ill dress'd." Shame on her pride,
Who by the idle vanities of dress
Denotes contempt, or kindles self regard.
Bring me this slighted child. She trembles, weeps,
Shrinks from my proffer'd hand, looks round alarm'd,
Steals on my face one timid glance, and smiles
To see a friendly aspect. Half assur'd,

She speaks, then pauses. She has much to tell;
But fears lest her untutor'd tongue should drop
Some coarse expression, or that nurse will chide
If troublesome. See, by my side all day
Patient she stands, while gentle offices
Speak her strong sense of kindness. Mother, turn!
Regard this blameless claimant; though her eye
Beam not the lustrous ray of beauty, see
Intelligence and gratitude. Her mien
Is homely, but thy forming hand may give
Polish'd deportment; or if stubborn joints
Frustrate thy plastic skill, through this harsh mould
Th' unfading charms of a celestial mind
May dart unenvied beauty. On this arm,
Brown and misshapen, may'st thou lean; this breast
May hide thy tears and blushes, when the shame
Of that fair wanton, taught by thee to run
The maze of folly, ends in guilt her course
Begun in vanity, and bids thee beg
For death, in bitterness of self reproach;

While this kind nurse, by ministrations wise,
And sweet endearments, piously withstands
Thy prayer, and on thy thorny pillow sheds
The healing opiate of consoling love.

But who comes now, with philosophic air,
Sententious, ripe in judgment, tho' in size
A pigmy. 'Tis a tiny Sócrates,
Now call'd a child of reason. It will run,
If you will tell it the inherent laws
Of motion. It will say its task, but first
Convince it language is the privilege
Of man. 'Tis fix'd and mute, if you attempt
Cogent authority; for well it knows
Its high prerogatives, equal and free.
And it can prate of rights, bid you assign
Your motives of decision, school your faults,
And argue you to silence. Gracious Heaven!
Transport me o'er the mountains of the moon,
Where Afric breeds her monsters; bid me cast

In Norway's seas my anchor, on the back
Of some vast kraken slumbering; let me hear,
Mid Portobello's putrid swamps, the hiss
Of serpents vast, whose pois'nous volumes roll
O'er many a rood*, rather than chain me down
To this portent, this fearful augury
Of unexampled times—when, early train'd
To disputation, to confess no law
But its own choice, no light except the beam
Of reason, dim in all, in some extinct,
And where most bright, dubious and changeable,
The educated sceptic comes prepar'd
To wage Typhœan war with heaven; nor asks
His unrepented sins and furious lusts
To goad him on, bewilder'd, to the gulph
Of infidel despair. These are not times
Of pagan ignorance: we halt not now
Between the koran and the cross, nor seek,
By metaphysic's darkling guidance, Him

* "Lay floating many a rood."—Milton.

Whom clearly shewn we worship, and confess,
By dedication and external forms,
To be our sovereign. Rebels we may be,
Or subjects liege; not aliens, free to choose
Roman or Spartan statutes, or to stand
In the Lyceum, or the porch, or seek,
From Zoroaster or Confucius sage,
A God of fire, or moral institutes.

Mothers, attend! a hand divine hath bless'd
Your infants, and a heavenly voice proclaim'd
Them meet for full beatitude. But say,
Did Jewish matrons to Messiah bring
Young reasoning scribes, in argument acute,
Who cavill'd with their Saviour, nor receiv'd
His benediction, till they knew what good
Extended hands convey; or docile babes,
Humble and gentle, with affections warm,
Prompt to ingenuous faith and guileless trust?
Such is the sweet simplicity that marks

The faithful christian; such the character
On which, as on a bank of violets,
The soul reposes, weary and displeas'd
With long pursuit of earth-born vanities.

Wouldst thou chain passion, wouldst thou vanquish pride,
Subdue injustice, and destroy the germs
Of falsehood, selfishness, and foul revenge?
Dost thou demand what culture best aspires
To meliorate the heart where evil springs
Redundant, virtue slowly? Go and learn
At the poor woodman's hut; thy chariot wheels
Oft pass it, and the ragged boys rush out
To open wide the forest gate, and catch
Thy smiles or casual largess. There at eve
Behold the thrifty matron summon round
Her frugal hearth a numerous brood, that glow
Ruddy with toil, or healthful exercise;
And while she plies her ceaseless needle, schools
Her lisping pupils, and to each imparts

Her little knowledge. Tho' the ray which gilds
Her mind is feeble, 'tis a spark deriv'd
From light divine, and will direct to heaven
The humble and the pious. Near her lies
The awe-inspiring rod, and at the fire
An apple or a chesnut, to reward
The docile scholar. One by one they name
The Father of mankind, and him whose days,
Prolong'd through ten centenaries, appear'd
Coeval with the sun; who walk'd with God,
And died not; who was strongest; and thy praise,
Patient Arabian sufferer! who abod'st
Beyond th' engraven rocks*, and didst foresee
A future resurrection, tho' the worms

* "In Arabia, near where Job was supposed to dwell, there are rocks extending for a large space, inscribed with characters too old to be recognized as belonging to any known language. Some supposed they were engraved by the Israelites during their abode in the wilderness; others, with more probability, that they were sepulchral memorials of the earliest ages. To these Job is thought to allude in the exclamation which ushers

Prey'd on thy flesh. Who built God's house they tell,
And of the shepherd-boy, who (heaven-sustain'd)
Vanquish'd Philistia's champion. Next they name
The Saviour of mankind; each duteous head
Bows in observance, and a softer tone
And look chastis'd, proclaim a secret awe,
Parent of piety! His heavenly deeds
They number o'er, astonish'd that he lay
A babe in Bethlem's stable, and perplex'd
The Jewish doctors. Lastly, they recite
The decalogue, the christian creed, the prayer
All perfect, by our great Exemplar taught
For everlasting use. The mother notes
Their apt proficiency; perchance laments
She can instruct no further, nor reward
Talents so brilliant with an ampler boon.

in his sublime profession of faith in the resurrection, 19th chapter, 24th verse." For a fuller account, see Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. p. 142. where they are called the written rocks or mountains.

And shall thy daughters, Luxury! who bend
Beneath the cumbrous load of useless hours,
And sicken for new pleasures, still deny
Their frigid hearts a transport dearer far
Than vanity e'er gave, a joy that breathes
The healing gales of paradise? Ah! think
Of your intrusted talents, number'd all
In the great book of count; ease, leisure, wealth,
Knowledge, persuasive powers, and every art
To aid instruction. Are your children fenc'd,
Like Abyssinia's princes, from the world,
Guarded and watch'd, lest the defiling taint
Of vulgar manners should corrode and soil
The gloss of suavity, the bending grace
Of all-alluring courtly elegance?
Are they, like infant-Moses, early taught
Egyptian knowledge, train'd and disciplin'd
In learning, taste, accomplishments, and arts?
And shall yon homely boy, uncouth and rude,
Be wiser to salvation? Wherefore, say,

Are ye exempt from anxious daily care
How best with scanty food to satisfy
Hunger importunate, save to afford
Your disencumber'd spirits time and space
To soar into futurity, and learn
The language of immortals? Were your hands
Reliev'd from labour to hang listless down,
To toss the fluttering shuttlecock of sport,
Or weave the tinsel web of vanity?
No: let those hands the book of life sustain,
Or in the deep humility of prayer
Be rais'd adoring. Chiefly ye who bear
A mother's sacred name, say, do ye love
The rosy cherubs, who at eve and morn
Meet you with blandishments? Those falling tears
Proclaim your dotage. Do ye wish them blest?
The silent language of that fervent sigh
Tells that your own content were cheaply sold
To purchase their felicity. Hear, then,
The faithful Muse, who calls you to insure

Not dubious, mix'd, uncertain, human bliss,
But bliss eternal, pure, and infinite.

Say, when the joyous nursery resounds
With shouts of infantine delight, the meed
Of happy sport, or the dry shaven lawn
Receives th' enfranchis'd troop, prepar'd to join
In blind-man's-buff, cricket, or hunt the hare;
When your hearts flutter till your cheeks are wet
With swelling rapture, do you only mark
The fair expansion of the agile limbs,
Bounding o'er fence and hillock, eyes that laugh
Through their fring'd curtains, rosy cheeks o'erhung
With auburn ringlets, tossing in the gale,
Or glittering in the sun? Admire ye not
The latent soul, which animates and guides
These graceful movements? Deathless is that soul,
Mortal its clay-built mansion, tho' thus fair:
And shall your sordid aims be all confin'd
To mould, and deck a feast for reptile worms,

Unmindful of th' angelic habitant
Intrusted to your nurture? Nor has God
Arm'd you with power to send the stranger home,
A guest unwelcome: here it must abide,
And from this middle world convey to heaven
Its earthly partner, or with that descend,
Buried in deep Tartarean gulphs of wo,
Beyond the terminating reign of time,
Beyond the reach of hope's all-cheering ray.

Shrink your recoiling hearts? The warning Muse
Is not a weïrd hag, nor sybil false,
Conjuring unreal phantasms, or dispos'd
To traffic in portents and feigned woes,
To scare the awe-struck rabble, or to please
Sick fancy, longing for a goblin tale.
Avaunt, unmeaning apprehensions! truth,
Awful and venerable, seeks to save
The mother's breast from pangs destin'd to last
Through the long ages of eternity.

Fain would she animate the blessed zeal
Of wise instruction, wisest when applied
To high immortal purposes, the meed
Of spirits heaven-deriv'd, and thither bound.

Begin then early. Bend the flexile knee,
Ere stiff resistance bids the sinew scorn
The gesture of obeisance. Stretch the hands
Heav'n-ward, while yet, submissive to your voice,
They rise not in defiance. Teach the tongue
The chaunt of angels, ere it grows expert
In the rebellious jargons first diffus'd
By Babel's disappointed labourers.
" Habit," the atheist cries, " is all." 'Tis well:
Bind then this potent habit to the yoke
Of true religion; bid it draw the car
Of earthly and immortal happiness;
Teach infant recollection to unite
With its first dawn the knowledge of its God,
While all before lies formless, dark, and void.

But chiefly, while the imitative powers
Float o'er the ductile frame, yourself preside
The priestess of your congregated babes,
And pure exemplar. Teach them from your look,
To learn devotion, from your precepts, truth,
And from your life, religion. Shall the beast
Instruct its young how seemliest to fulfil
Its brutal functions? Shall the bird direct
Her newly-feather'd offspring to expand
Their wings, and soar into the azure vault,
Their humbler heav'n? And shall the nobler race
Of man, creation's sovereign, uninform'd
Of their high calling, waste the morn of life,
Unconscious whence they sprang, or whither tend?

How sweetly looks the cherub Innocence,
Led by the seraph Piety to tread
The earthly courts of God. How sweetly sounds
Its dulcet voice, breath'd in the low response,
Or louder rising in the full-ton'd sound

Of choral hallelujahs, or the stave
Solemn and plaintive, such as best beseems
Frail mortals communing with God. Observe,
The church is mute, while, circling in the nave,
Fair girls and rosy boys assorted stand,
To speak the faith, the duty, and the hope,
Which designate the christian. Pride and joy
Flush in the cheeks of these; erect they stand,
Glance round th' observant eye, and with prompt speech
Anticipate inquiry. Meekly those,
With downcast look, and awe-depressed voice,
Twirling their cap or bonnet in their hand,
Haste through the well-known lesson, glad to pay
The closing ceremonial, and retire;
Of honour unambitious, yet content
They were not counted with the stupid dolt,
Who blunder'd at each sentence, lost to all,
Ev'n to the sense of public ignominy.

Nor let the mother, who has wisely school'd

Her youthful catechumens, share the blush
Of timid modesty, unapt to shew
Its own proficiency. Amid the flowers
That purfle spring's green vest, are aught so prais'd
As those which pensile fill their honied bells,
And shun observance. Such the violet,
Whose perfume never dies, the snowdrop chaste,
Patient of wintry storms, and cowslips pied,
Whose sweet infusion forms the beverage pure
Of village girls on May-day's festival,
Adorning their trim garlands. Close immur'd
By a rough battlement of turgid leaves,
Th' anana ripens her nectareous fruit
Unparallel'd. Opaque and disesteem'd,
Because unknown, the diamond in the mine
Lies perfecting for ages, to acquire
A splendor that will beggar rival states,
Contending for the gem. Mothers, revere
These warning calls of nature; nor confound
The slow developement of timid worth

With weak stupidity, or the cold heart
Of wilful, proud, determin'd ignorance.
Have ye not read, or, reading, ne'er remark'd
The doubts of Samuel, when from Ramah far
As Bethlehem he journey'd, to anoint
A son of Jesse king*. Stately and tall,
He mark'd Eliab, and exclaim'd, " In him
Behold the chosen of the Lord." " Not so,"
The well-known voice of inspiration cried,
" God seeth not like man; he views the heart,
Not the mere grandeur of the outward form."
Restrain'd the prophet bow'd his head, nor felt
The sacred impulse, tho' seven brethren came
To join in sacrifice. " Hast thou no more?"
He ask'd th' unconscious sire. " A child, my lord,
My youngest, a mere stripling, with my sheep."
" Go, fetch the lad, and be the feast delay'd
Which claims his presence." David soon appear'd,
Ruddy with youth, and clad in shepherd-garb,

* 1st Samuel, 16th chapter.

Yet victor of a lion and a bear
That flew upon his father's flock, altho'
Th' unboasted conquest was to all unknown.
Fair was his person, but more lovely far
His spotless soul, illumin'd with the charms
Of heav'nly beauty. The adoring seer
Perceiv'd the call divine. In copious streams
He pour'd th' anointing oil; largely it flow'd
On the rapt youth's brown tresses, pallid cheek,
(Chill'd by supernal awe) and throbbing breast;
In which henceforth the spirit of his God
Became an inmate; tho' again he turn'd
To pastoral duties, and resign'd to Him,
Who will'd to him a crown, the destin'd means
To seat him guiltless on his promis'd throne.
Nor did he quit his sheep-cots till the cries
Of suffering Israel, and Philistia's threats,
Urg'd his heroic spirit to defy
The giant infidel, and with one blow
Assert his country's honour, and his God's.

Ask ye for what among the sons of men
Was the sweet psalmist signaliz'd? His life,
Shaded by many a lapse, too plainly shews
The instability of erring man.
'Twas by the radiance of unclouded faith,
And fervour of devotion; champions these,
Who best can liberate the imprison'd soul
From tyrant-appetite, and lead it back
Through the still walks of penitence to peace.
These were his early, constant, best allies,
Th' associates of his forest-cares, the friends
Who gave him strength to fell the savage beasts,
And him of Gath, chief of th' uncircumcis'd.
These bore his warbled praises up to heaven,
From camps, and courts, and desart solitudes;
These also gave him firmness to subdue
Revenge, worst foe of virtue, when he spar'd
His royal persecutor*, as he lay

* 1st Samuel, 26th chapter, 9th verse.

Sleeping unguarded, yet in turbid dreams,
Projecting death to him who o'er him stood
To guard a life, the terror of his own.

Is there a scene of danger or of guilt,
Danger past hope, guilt irremediable,
Through which religion's bright effulgence casts
No guiding ray benign? Is there a pang
She cannot heal, a wo to which her voice
In dove-like murmurs does not whisper hope?
Gilt by her beams, the sister virtues look
More beauteous; love and pity, then refin'd
From earthly dross, assume the sacred form
Of charity, all perfect and all pure.
Sublim'd by her, valour transports its name
To christian fortitude, patient to feel,
And mighty to perform. Her power can change
The sordid wisdom of the subtle snake
To foresight, caution, and discernment sage;
Th' intelligence of angels, ministers

Of judgment or of mercy, as best suits
His mandates whom they serve, the holy God.

Has faith this power—and shall the mother fail
Early to light its lamp, and give the charge
To her young pilgrims, ere they venture forth
In life's vast wilderness, where hungry wolves,
Hyenas pitiless, and adders haunt;
Where sirens, more delusive far than they
Whom chain'd Ulysses struggled to adore,
Chaunt their sweet strains, devour their worshippers,
And charm new victims! By the lamp of faith,
Justly descried, the painted harlots change
Their meretricious beauties to the loath'd
And bloated form of sin, while their sweet songs
End in the mournful howlings of despair.

Ye who, just venturing on a world untried,
Suspect no danger, guard with vestal zeal
This heav'n-born beam, which, like the pillar'd fire,

Shall lead you from Egyptian servitude
To a celestial Canaan. Fence it round
From the sly blast of biting ridicule,
Which withers unawares. Nor stint its dole
Of daily oil, lest its bright rays should pale
Before the gorgeous Baal of mankind:
So, when your dimm'd eyes shall no more behold
The blaze of earthly splendour, visions far
More glorious shall appear; the world unseen
Shall give you all its pure realities,
On which your souls have ponder'd, while beheld,
As in a mirror, darkling and obscure.

And ye who, conversant in life, well know
Its shelves, its rocks, and quicksands; mothers, join
To prudent precept and example chaste,
O join the potent energy of prayer
For grace divine, best guard of feeble man,
Best foil of wily Satan. He, dismay'd,
Flies from the hand in holy warfare rais'd,

As Amalek from Amram's suppliant son *.
Love ye your children? I again inquire:
Kneel in your closets, kneel, and crave of heaven
That blessing they will ask you to impart.
So shall they feel it not an empty form,
But powerful benediction, like the dew
From Hermon, shedding on the thirsty vale
Fertility and beauty. Prayer has power
To pierce the empyrean, if preferr'd
For treasures spiritual. Fear not, press on;
Importunate, ask fresh supplies of faith,
Humility and patience, peace and love;
Till the young Christian, kneeling at your side,
Partakes your ardours, and discerns the power
Of truths by memory graven on the soul,
Ere rip'ned judgment knew they were divine.

Nor will your solitary worship long
Lack such communion sweet. Affection soon

* Exodus, 17th chapter, 11th verse.

Ripens to pious feeling. Christian lore
Proffers meet sustenance to all; for babes
The rudiments of knowledge are prepar'd,
Far easier of digestion than that fruit
Of knowledge now permitted to mankind,
Tho' once in Eden from our sire withheld
By special interdiction, while the tree
Of life sustain'd him; till, by flaming swords
Of cherubs, exil'd and sent forth to till
A wilderness of briers and thorns, he sought
Knowledge so late his curse, and from it gain'd
The means of scant subsistence. Thus his race
Must labour, and with anxious search explore
The leafy tree of bitter fruit, till time
Ripens the vast designs of Providence,
And sheaths the cherub's sword. Then shall arise
A paradise more lovely than that fam'd
Mesopotamian garden, fertiliz'd
By deep Euphrates; its extended pale
Shall circumscribe the earth, a sanctuary
For truth, and love, and pious gratitude.

But ere this promis'd purity; ere yet
The desert blossoms, and the thirsty sand
Bubbles with cooling fountains; ere the kid
Sports dandled by the lion; ere the snake
Innoxious round the playful infant twines;
Ere enmity shall cease, and war lie bound
In endless durance;—shall arise a storm
Loud, unremitting, vast, from pole to pole
Extending, plucking empires from the roots,
And shaking earth's foundations, till it reels
Like a vex'd drunkard, staggering with its load
Of violence and guilt. Ere yet condemn'd
To everlasting silence, war shall blow
His trumpet louder than the roar when Greece
Compass'd the Trojan wall, or Xerxes arm'd
His myriads, or the Macedonian goat
Beat down the Persian ram*, and vanquished
From Thessaly to Indus. Not so vast
The Cimbrian or the Scythian hordes, nor those

* Daniel, chapter 8th, verse 7th.

Which Zenghis or which Tamerlane led forth
From Samarcand o'er Caucasus, to spoil
The peaceful sons of industry and wealth,
As the innumerous multitude whom this
Dire clarion shall embattle. Nor did man
Groan 'neath such woes extreme when Attila
Gave wasted Europe to his spoiling Huns;
Or Afric, blasted by the Vandal scourge,
Chang'd her large cities, and her fertile fields
For barren, silent, mournful solitudes*,
As shall ensue when the fierce infidel,
Predicted long, long sought, by most believ'd
Now fast unfolding, shall erect on high
His standard, and from all the winds of heaven
Summon the congregated foes of God
To war against his earthly residence,
His chosen church: that ark, toss'd by the storms,

* For a brief but impressive account of the consequences of these inroads, the reader is referred to Dr. Robertson's Introduction to the History of Charles V.

And vex'd by inward discord, yet ordain'd
Still to contend and suffer, till the time
Of victory, when Armageddon's fight
Shall gather in the vintage of the world,
And empt the final vial, pour'd in wrath
On much offending man. Then from that field,
Wide as thy limits, Palestine, and drench'd
Knee-deep in gore, shall rise the mingled screams
Of vultures tearing royal prey, the groans
Of fix'd despair, the wild outrageous yells
Of dying blasphemy, mingled with shouts
Of triumph, till angelic lauds compose
The tumult, hymning, as in Bethlehem's field,
Peace and good-will to man; th' infernal host
In full array defeated, and condemn'd
To their dark mansions, there to mourn in chains
A thousand years. Henceforth, O God! thy will
Be done on earth, as evermore in heav'n.

These days will surely come; the fearful when
Eludes short-sighted man. Whether the babe,

Who in mute wonder eyes thee while thy soul
Anticipates these horrors, and compares
The sacred volume with the passing scene,
Startled at each similitude, amaz'd
At each fulfilment, and with shuddering awe
Expecting new events, prelusive all,
And ushering in the closing scenes of time,—
Whether thy darling child "with multitudes*
Shall in the valley of decision stand"
Seal'd by his God, or warring with the hosts
Doom'd to confusion, spoil, or massacre,
Ask not of erring man. One care be thine,
To bring thy treasure early to the ark;
'Tis only safe beneath the care of Him
Who, in the present evermore beholds
The future, and the past. His providence
Regards his meanest creatures, while his word
Measures the date of worlds. Whether this clay
Shall wake from death re-edified, or chang'd
As erst the patriarch and the prophet, rise

* Joel, 3d chapter, 14th verse.

To meet the Lord in air, Him it must meet
Thrice blest, if as a servant, not a foe.

Sure are the daily visitings of light;
Sure is the course of planetary worlds;
Sure is the stroke of death; but surer far
Thy word, O Prophecy! The time shall come
When the quench'd sun in chaos shall dissolve,
The planetary worlds start from their spheres,
And death resign his sceptre, swallow'd up
In victory; but thy resplendent light
Shall then shine brighter, emanation pure
Of light essential, uncreate, divine!

# EDUCATION.

## ARGUMENT.

The mother's duty changes as her children advance in years. The boys must be placed under the superintendence of their own sex, as the fittest way of acquiring manliness of character. Wholesome effect of the discipline of public schools on nursery-tyrants. Story of Cyrus and his school-fellows. The intrusion of vice into public seminaries not a sufficient reason against sending boys out. Domestic education often forms timid, self-important, or sensual characters. The moral principles of boys may be secured by early religious instruction, and good examples at home. Domestic education is preferable for daughters. Unfortunate predilection of the inferior classes for showy, superficial instruction. The cottager's daughter described. The yeoman's anxiety for appropriate instruction. Portrait of a liberally educated, elegant family, who, by their example, refine their inferiors. Accomplishments are too eagerly pursued by the higher classes. Examples of superior cultivation in Lady Jane Grey, Lady Mary Sidney, and the second Queen Mary. True and false courtesy. Strict attention is necessary from the mother till her eldest daughter supplies her place.

## BOOK III.

## EDUCATION.

SAY, in this world of mutability
Where shall we rest secure, or pitch our tent
Beyond the painful visitings of change?
Has Duty too turn'd recreant? Did he fix
The careful mother in the narrow walk
Of her own family, and bid her eye
Direct the little commonwealth, till use
Render'd confinement pleasure, and the prate
Of gay simplicity and wonder bland,
Than deep discussion or colloquial wit
More grateful. Tyrant! dost thou now enjoin
Those tender arms with lax embrace to yield
Their dear delights to strangers? Must those eyes,
Fix'd long with rapture on the winning forms
Of opening beauty and expanding grace,

Seek other objects, by disuse become
Distasteful? or else bid them in despair
Close on the dull vacuity of life,
Its occupation ended. Yet, again,
Learn from th' aerial tenantry. Behold,
The swallow tends with diligence her young,
Till their fledg'd pinions gather strength to skim
Th' elastic air, and shame dependent sloth;
Bidding their vigorous owners seek the pool,
That colony of gay ephemeras
Sporting in sunshine, or with level sweep
Entrap the gadfly, lest autumnal storms
Surprise them unprepar'd, to speed their long
And painful voyage o'er th' Atlantic surge
For many a night and day, till gain'd at last
" The isles call'd Fortunate," where summer reigns
Endless, and all is life, and all is joy.

So must the mother to the discipline
Of stern coercion and collision yield

The pilgrims of this world, adventurers bound
To isles not fabled, nor of dubious search.
Hast thou by wise restrictions, nicely join'd
With tender care, knit into useful grace
The noble form of man? Hast thou subdu'd
The too redundant, pertinacious growth
Of daring, stedfast fortitude, and check'd
Keen emulation, ere it touch'd the verge
Of morbid envy? Hast thou deeply school'd
Thy pupil in the code of truth, ere pride
Made him indocile, or a pagan creed
Charm'd his rapt fancy with chimeras sweet,
Dear even to age, to visionary youth
Most dear, in witching harmony convey'd,
And grac'd by learning with distinctions high
And honourable praise? Hast thou done this,
Handmaid of God? Well hast thou done: now yield
Thy agile, virtuous, well-instructed boy
To those who know life's subtle maze, untried
By the safe ignorance which bounds thy walk

To the domestic pale. The future heir
Of thy manorial honours, and the youth
Destin'd to carve his fortunes, must o'erleap
That bound, and with his fellow-citizens
Contend in conflict skilful, but not base,
Arduous, not vicious. On a bolder scale
Than female softness can project, with nerves
Brac'd tighter than maternal tenderness
Can strain, must man be form'd, intrepid man,
Lord of this lower world, pilot of state,
Rough mariner, pilgrim of every soil,
Oft shipwreck'd, oft benetted round with foes,
Destin'd to hardy toil, and stern rebuffs,
But never to despair. Ev'n now thou spurn'st
The puling marmoset, who shrinks from pain,
And bids his sisters save him from the wasp
That buzzes round his sugar'd cates, yet tears
Their dolls in vengeance. Thus in early life
Look tyranny and cowardice, anon
To scowl in forms more hateful. Would'st thou cleanse

The soil of these curs'd weeds? Alas! thy tilth
Will only skim the surface, while his nurse
Whispers young master that the day will come
He need not mind mamma; born to command
A vassal world, and to his sovereign will
Bend the hereditary slaves destin'd
To serve his greatness. In thy studious walks,
Wintonia, or where Henry's holy shade
Listen'd entranc'd, what time his antique towers
Rang with the harp of Gray, whose dulcet song
Rose o'er the silvery Thames, this baby king
Must abdicate his power, and his smooth hands
Harden with strenuous exercise; for he
Must climb the aspen, stem the wintry flood,
Delve the green turf for worms, explore the pool
For cresses, or the moor for plover's eggs,
Just as the lordly comrade whom he serves
Commands his labours; till, by studious skill,
He vaults from form to form, and gains at last
Distinctions hardly earn'd, and nobler far

Than those chance arbitrates. Invested now
With power, but taught by service to command
With temper'd justice, and to fear the scoffs
Of young compatriots, glowing with disdain
Of cruelty and wrong; dreading to soil
The gloss of letter'd glory with reproach
Sarcastical, authority turns mild,
Wears the sweet aspect of protecting love,
Participation generous, and benign
Instruction. Virtue ripens thus; thus forms
The patron, and the master, and the friend.
By suffering taught compassion, temper'd rule
By strict obedience; led to just renown
By painful, slow progression; forc'd to feel
Rank cannot patch the tatter'd cloak of shame,
Nor from derision and opprobrium guard
Oppression, insolence, deceit, and wrong;
The cocker'd hero of the nursery
Turns manly from necessity, conceals
His wants, his whims, his terrors, and his pouts,

Unheeded, or by shouts reprov'd, perchance
Vanquish'd by rougher discipline. He sees
Proud self-importance slighted, while esteem,
And confidence, and firm adherence crown
The curate's boy as captain; for his parts
Lov'd by his master, for his manners more
By those who see him in his hours of sport:
Faithful and valiant, bold in enterprise,
Wise in contrivance, scrupulously just,
And generous ev'n in enmity; in love
Warm and unshaken, both in deed and word
Veracious, and abhorrent of disguise.

So 'mid his playmates shone Mandane's son*,
The heir of Media, Persia's future lord.
Bred in a shepherd's guise; with matchless skill
He forc'd the haughty satrap to confess
Virtue's divine supremacy; and train'd
On swift Araxes' banks by youthful sports

* Cyrus the Great.

The heroes destin'd to subdue thy strength
Vast Babylon, terror of nations, girt
With walls immense, and turrets manifold;
Invincible, till He who metes the term
Of empires, weighed thee in his righteous scale,
And found thee wanting. From the boast of kings,
Henceforth for ever chang'd to miry swamps,
Where serpents hiss and mournful bitterns scream,
Thy towers, thy palaces, thy guilt, thy name,
Swept from the earth by an Almighty arm,
Wielding destruction's besom vast and dire*.

Yet in those haunts where active virtue first
Unfolds his eaglet-wings, where friendship's fires
Enkindle, and the thirst for honest praise
Pains the desiring soul, as yet unknown
To glory's bright record, the haggard form
Of danger lurks, to scare with fancied ills

* Isaiah, 14th chapter, 23d verse.

The distant mother, as she ponders oft
The hair-breadth 'scapes of daring enterprise,
Or ills more dreadful, from enticements dire
Of sin, parent of shame, remorse, and death!
Yet say, is there a path on earth secure
From her contagion? If in public schools,
Or academic groves, she stalks reveal'd
In all her horrors, underneath thy wing
The sorceress will steal, and deeply taint
Thy guarded nursling with unsocial pride,
And stubborn self-complacence, or unman
His timid spirit with chimeras vain;
Till, shrinking from his proper task, he flies
To criminal obscurity, the dupe
Of knaves, the jest of sycophants, perchance
The slave of grossest appetites; yet, still
Aping strict morals and sententious worth,
He raves with maudlin anger at the world
Of which he nothing knows. His flatterers
Applaud the dirge monotonous, and drown
With many a glass their grief for wicked man.

Nor to the magisterial powers who rule
In learning's public walks imputé the blame,
If vice there triumph in her numerous slaves:
Mothers, 'tis yours to form a reptile swarm
Of sceptics, or a host of Christians fraught
With faith and hope divine. 'Tis also yours
To sow the seeds of moral purity,
Or fan the infant-passions till they blaze,
Fed with infernal fuel. Is your home
The hall of temperate Agis? Are your feasts
Like those Augustus spread, while round him sat
The Julian line? Plain was their food, but high
Their minds regal'd, list'ning to Virgil's song,
Or the Venusian lyrist, on whose head
Doves scatter'd laurels*. Have you vow'd your house,
Like victor Joshua's, consecrate to heav'n?
Or have the demons gluttony, and lust,
And vanity there fix'd their teraphim,
As in the court of Comus, or the sty
Of Circe, or Acrasia's dangerous bower?

* Horace, see Ode 4th, Book 3d.

What send you to be school'd ? The virgin wax,
Docile, or printed with the seal of truth
Indelible ? The pliant ozier, bent
To useful purposes ? The fertile vine,
Whose rich redundance and luxuriant shoots
Ask and repay the pruner's skill ? Alas !
'Tis oft the blinking mole, whose narrow ken
Turns earthward ; or the crab with crooked stalk,
Stubborn excrescences, and fruit austere ;
Or parasitic mistletoe, who delves
Her root unnatural, all culture scorns,
And if transplanted dies. On the wild gorse
Look for the rose of Shiraz, ere ye seek
Knowledge or virtue from the ill-train'd sons
Of blind indulgence, luxury, or pride.

The boys remov'd where harsher discipline
Best forms the patriot and the hero, still,
Like the vale-lily, 'neath their parent shade
The daughters flourish, all unmeet to bear

The noontide ray or buffet of the winds.
In cool obscurity they ripen slow,
Their bashful beauty by a mother's eye
Noted; if wise, not prais'd: for well she knows
That affectation with distorted grace
Can warp the fairest form, and envy dim
The brightest eyes, while bold coquetry aims
Her darts unheeded, or but scares the prey
She means to vanquish. Modest flowers adorn
The spring, and in the spring of life no grace
So sweet as modesty. 'Tis a home-plant
Which dies with hot-house culture, but demands
The kind refreshings of maternal love,
And cautious praise, and gentle precept, still
Led by example in the daily walk
Of uniform propriety. The scene
Where woman acts is home; be home the school
In which she learns her part. If grac'd by sense,
With leisure blest, and sanctified by worth,
Let the preceptor mother dedicate

To her lov'd girls her well expended hours,
And train their hearts to virtue and to heaven.
The harvest of her labours shall adorn
Autumnal life, when like the vine she shows,
Bearing her purple clusters, precious all,
And goodly to behold. Then the rich dew
Of filial love falls on her silver locks,
Unction divine! and grateful duty warms
A bosom callous to all other joys.

Ah! self-afflicting ignorance, which prompts
The fashion-loving dame, low-bred, yet born
A votaress of gentility, to lead
Her uninstructed daughters to the fair
Of vanity, to barter grace for show,
Plain sense for pertness, honesty and truth
For simulation, industry for taste,
If taste it can be deem'd to do that ill,
Which to do well in her were idleness.
O rest contented, rustic wives; retain

Your daughters at the spinning-wheel and churn;
Avoid the name of school, till schools arise
To teach true knowledge, not accomplishments,
And with simplicity of speech disclaim
Young lady-pupils and young lady-arts.
Girls are grown scarce, plain housewives out of vogue,
Hodge cannot find a mate; but Hodge himself
Is chang'd to Roger Riot, or Beau Bob:
How fortunate! for Jobson's daughter Peg
Is just return'd Miss Margaret, complete
With six months' education. She talks French,
Sings, paints, draws, dances, thumbs an old spinet,
And shines in works of uselessness. Her dower
Is fifty pounds: Bob wins her. Happy pair!
Soon shall the parish-vestry know your bliss,
When, with undarned hose and shirt unwash'd,
The thriftless husband asks a weekly sum
To feed his wife, who can do nothing. "What!
Six months at school?" "Ah, masters, that undid
All that her mother taught in sixteen years."

Turn we from folly, when its stamp thus seems
Too gross for satire; verging to the bounds
Of wild insanity, it asks restraints,
Not pasquinades: now fairer game appears,
The wealthy yeoman's daughter. Must she sit,
And rusticate at home, untrain'd, untaught,
Her mother a shrewd housewife, and her sire
Sordid, and gross, and ignorant? Must she
Be a mere vehicle to carry down
His tenements and meadows to a race
Dead as her ancestors to liberal worth,
Hard as their gold, and stubborn as their lands?
Her eye bespeaks intelligence, her smile
Benignity. She wishes to oblige,
And pants for knowledge. Sweet one, I must wail
The sad alternative which bids thee stay
The untaught child of nature; or exchange
Thy pure simplicity for guile, and art,
And studied awkwardness. Thou hast no skill
To note and reprobate the screw, the twist,

The idle loll, the bridle, and the toss,
When shown to thee for graces, and withheld
From copying purer models. Hence, alas!
Thy pretty mouth will grin when it should smile;
Thy feet will amble, not pace smooth; thy arms
Fidget and twirl, not drop with quiet ease,
Or bend in graceful fold. Thy governess
Proclaims this fashion, and thy mother's eyes,
Which follow thee admiring, are unapt
To recognise the cheat who stole her cash,
And spoil'd her girl: a mincing witch, whose spells
Have hunted nature from her rustic burghs,
And scatter'd hamlets, late her reign—now given
To squinting affectation, who all day
Sits making nets for lovers. Fool! the world
Has other business than to look on thee,
Save with one casual glance of hate or scorn.

O for the dawn of reason rightly nam'd,
Reason on God depending, and in him

Seeking perfection! Blessed harbinger
Of peace and joy, when will thy dawn arise!
Then education, school'd by truth, shall turn
Her culture to the temper and the heart.
There, while ameliorating time completes
Her labours slowly, shall she delve and prune,
Root out each vice indigenous, and plant
Virtues, the growth of Canaan's heavenly clime,
Odorous, healing. Patient shall she toil,
Lay line on line, till, well compact and firm,
A temple rises, founded on a base
Of adamant, unlike th' infernal pile
Of Pandemonium, which spontaneous rose
To fifes and timbrels, glittering but unsound.

Then shall the tongue, and eye, and voice, and heart,
Chime in sweet unison; no studied smile
(Mock gentleness) shall part the lip, while rage,
Envy, or malice, in the guilty breast,
Stretch merit on the iron-rack of spleen,

Tho' scourg'd themselves with scorpions. Knowledge,
Wandering no more in fairy land to twine [then,
Moonshine and gossamer, from the grave scroll
Of history shall glean experienced saws,
And applicable wisdom; or, perchance,
Hold converse high with nature, and inquire
Her author and her laws. Meanwhile applied
To useful purpose, like Lemuel's spouse,
Shall occupation for her household weave
Scarlet or Tyrian purple, meet attire
For dignity decorous; or prepare,
Like Dorcas, coats and garments for the poor,
Provident husbandry, repaid by heaven
With robes unperishing, and glorious all.
No more shall levity, and her twin-witch,
Pale dissipation, people home with fiends
And spectres, but the household-gods shall sit
Smiling around the hearth; while vanity,
Like a poor bankrupt-milliner, reloads
Her caravan with frippery, beads, and toys,

Complaining, tho' her wares are excellent,
The ladies are no fashionists. O time,
Speed this auspicious æra! but these eyes,
Dim with long search, will close ere it appears.

Sick of wise ignorance, distorted grace,
Ill-manner'd freedom, and perverted taste,
I ask the Muse to bear me where yon oaks
Shade the baronial residence; there sits
Almeria, late the grace of courts, retir'd
Among her daughters. Industry and skill
Direct their labours, while instruction sage
Guides the alternate reader through the stores
Of knowledge and of truth, succeeded soon
By strains angelic; or th' unfetter'd feet
Spring in the agile dance, and wintry days
Conclude with healthful exercise, begun
By visits to the dairy, or the farm,
Or garden-labours, or kind gossipings
Among the villagers, the poor, the sick,

The helpless, the infirm. Nor these alone:
Enlighten'd charity has other claims
Save those of indigence, nor to her purse
Limits her distributions. In the robe
Of sweet authority she conquers spleen,
Disarms brutality with smiles, and warms
With her bright beams unfeeling avarice,
Brooding mid cobwebs on his unsunn'd hoards;
Till, not from pity, but from pride, he drops
His dole unsanctified, yet precious still
To thy vast cravings, shivering indigence!

Thus affable, beneficent, and kind,
The lovely visitants impart the charms
Of unaffected worth, the ready grace
Of native condescension, eyes that dart
Th' unstudied glance of love, and the sweet tone
Of words mellifluous, dropping truth and sense
On the charm'd ear. Th' astonish'd rustics hail
The gracious strangers, all enamour'd now,

Of nature polish'd, not transpos'd by art,
They curse the limping sorceress who requir'd
Their homage as gentility. O name
More idoliz'd than wisdom, since thy sway
Is universal, oft reveal thy face,
Lest some false Florimel usurp thy throne.

As Ceres, wandering through Achaia, chang'd
A barbarous people, and a barren clime
To copious harvests, and a golden age
Of plenty, harmony, content, and joy;
Blessings remember'd long, whether beside
Thy stream, Ilyssus, grateful Athens slew
Her victim-ram; or, with transcendent pomp,
Eleusis form'd her votive games, combin'd
With rites mysterious, in deep sanctity,
And awful gloom involv'd: so shall the smiles,
The mild persuasion, and the manner'd ease
Of nymphs like thine, Almeria, give our fields
The purer charms of courts. Sweetness shall reign

Without its base concomitant, disguise;
Grace shall unite with kind attention, prone
To feel another's wo. Sorrow shall change
Loud petulance to patience; ease assume
An air benignant; and Sir Calidore,
As in the days of Gloriane, o'erthrow*
The blatant beast, monster of insolence,
Assailing virtue with a thousand tongues.

Ye who aspire to please, yet slight the charms
Of plain simplicity (a rustic maid
Close clad in russet, with a hat of straw
Shading her auburn locks, an artless blowze,
Tho' much belov'd), first learn that elegance,
Native to some high-favour'd, must by most
With studious search be woo'd. Three graces join
To fold the robe of Cypria's queen; the face
Apelles painted, caught from every nymph,
Where every nymph is beauty, some soft charm

* Fairy Queen, Book 6. Canto 12.

To form perfection, blended nice, and join'd
In one bright whole, not like the motley coat
Of mirth-provoking Harlequin. The grace
Which floats o'er yon fine figure is a veil
Subtile as gossamer; thy grogram net
Is not more like it than the whalebone-hoop
Of stiffen'd tiffany of elder times.
Long did the mother brace the pliant arms,
Restrain th' elastic step, and bend each limb
With gentle undulation, ere, complete,
Belinda darted through the mazy dance,
A new Terpsichore; like her of old
Crown'd with green laurels, and as loosely rob'd,
While the sweet timbrel in her hand resounds
Responsive to her steps; now vaulting high,
Now skimming lightly the meandering maze,
The airy figure with each stated bend
Twines graceful, while the floating drapery
Unstudied, yet with nice adjustment, falls.
Peals of applause succeed, and Parisot

And Polymela must resign the palm.
Ah! seek it not, ye mothers, dearly bought
By the pure blush of modesty, content
With sober praise, or calm pre-eminence
In unobtrusive goodness. Years of toil,
And hours of torture, stolen from wise research,
Or active virtue, gave a high-born maid,
Dian's chaste votaress, the degrading skill
To ape the hireling's meretricious charms.

Nor praise I those entranc'd by love of song;
Song without sense, unlike the living strains
That Clio pour'd to Phœbus, or thy notes,
Cecilia, which from high and heavenly quires,
From golden harps and dulcet harmonies,
Call'd down angelic visitants to hear
The lauds of mortals. Different far the aims
Of her who immolates at music's shrine
Her gagg'd and fetter'd hours. Awful offence,
Inexpiable! Destinies sublime,

High duties, firm resolves, important cares,
Await each child of Adam; not the toils
Of the cag'd bullfinch, who, from morn to noon,
From noon to silent evening, trills the chaunt
Of joyless indolence. Unknown to him
The nectar'd sweets which occupation spreads
On herb and flower, on heaths or sunny glens,
To solace the industrious bee. Unknown
To thee, fair slave of fashion and of sound,
That harmony sublime the approving voice
Of conscience warbles, when, at close of day,
It chaunts the vespers of content, and pours
The requiem sleep best loves. Strains so divine
Thou leav'st to the poor curate's weary girl,
Returning from the dying villager
Her kindness fail'd to save. Dearer to thee
Is the bravissiment of gay Sir Plume,
Or the half-smile and low responsive hum
By which Beau Dilletanti deigns to note
The measure, while thy hands, with nimble sleight,

Run o'er the trembling keys, and thy forc'd voice,
With alto quavers and convulsive shakes,
Adorns the nothing of the season, learn'd
And ridicul'd by all. For such an end
Giv'st thou the hours and pains which might suffice
To form a Verulam, more than the term,
Fair spouse of Dudley *, which the iron-times
Gave to thy brief but well expended life!
Ambition's victim! learning's paragon!
Martyr of truth! and miracle of worth!
Thine was the lure of beauty, thine the pride
Of birth, from kings deriv'd; love too was thine,
Happy connubial love. Yet couldst thou spurn
The bribe of added years, and meekly lay
Thy golden ringlets on the block, distain'd
With blood far dearer than thine own; his blood,
Thy lord's, thy Dudley's, whom thou mightst have sav'd
By turning recreant to thy God. As erst,
In thy paternal towers, thou didst prefer

* Lady Jane Grey.

Thy holy meditations to the chace,
Or noisy revelry, so thou couldst die
Rather than swerve from duty. But thy youth
Laps'd not in vain attainments. Thou didst drink
Largely at truth's full fountain, unprofan'd
By doubt or error; and the Attic bee *,
Who soar'd on mortal pinion till he touch'd
The empyrean heaven, fed thee with sweets,
Cull'd from his well-stor'd hive. Nor was thy stock
Of female graces scant, rich in desert,
But richest, wisest, happiest, thou didst gain
The pearl inestimable. In years a child,
Amid the shipwreck of thy earthly hopes,
Through troublous seas thy bark shot straight to heav'n.

Such are the glorious fruits life's early hours
Well husbanded produce. Mothers, attend!
Nor on a soft Armida, skill'd in arts
Voluptuous, waste your cares, which, well applied,

* Plato.

Might fashion angels dower'd with gifts divine,
Nor less invincible for human charms.

'Twas in these saintly labours pass'd the hours
Of rash Northumberland's chaste daughter *, wife
Of uncorrupted Sidney. She abjur'd
The vain pursuits that lur'd her father's fall,
Devote to holiest duties. Where the oaks
Of Penshurst wave o'er Medway's virgin flood,
She rear'd the rose of Britain, and its sword,
In every region, and in every age
Sacred alike to virtue and the Muse;
Blending high talents with the chaster praise
Of pious sanctity, yet all deriv'd
From the maternal themes, the rich result
Of unobtrusive graces, in the school
Of christian wisdom early train'd: there sat

* The Lady Mary Sidney, daughter of Dudley Duke of Northumberland, wife to Sir Henry Sidney, and mother to the renowned Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Countess of Pembroke.

The parent-tutoress, there young Philip's eyes
First flash'd divine intelligence, while truth
From Mary's rosy lips in lisping strains
Sooth'd the rapt mother; while, by faith inspir'd,
She saw immortal crowns and lucid robes
Invest her angel-offspring, doom'd to stand
Conspicuous in an age most eminent
In the long records of Britannia's fame.

Who shone in courts the fairest of the fair?
Who guided England's helm with matchless skill?
Who as a woman charm'd, and as a wife
Was best belov'd? Thy blameless spouse, Nassau,
Delight of Britain, glory of her time,
Virtue's firm friend, the solacer of grief,
Oppression's scourge, and patroness of law;
For whom the Muse still, with regretful tears,
Bedews the wreaths sepulchral, twin'd long since
By hands divine for Mary's early bier.

O princess! while the splendour of thy name
Wakes emulation in the kindred breasts
Of those fair graces who on Albion shed
Influence benign, in virtue as in birth
Pre-eminent, still on the pure record
Of thy unsullied life maternal love
Shall deeply muse, enamour'd of thy fame,
And oft dismiss her daughters to the school
Which taught thee wisdom. From the sacred page,
Theme of thy daily studies, British maids
Shall learn thy lovely virtues, sanctitude,
And manners pure, humility and truth,
With courtesy their offspring. How unlike
The changeling who usurps her name, begot
By pride on artifice, and train'd to cheat
Simple credulity, a village-child,
Too apt to gaze at mountebanks, and toss
Its savings to the party-colour'd knave
Who bows so gracefully, and talks so smooth.

With guile as palpable, false courtesy
Wins by grimace the vulgar; fawns, and grins,
And licks the dust in humbleness; yet still,
Devote to Mammon's service, not to God's,
It weighs with nicest poise the future gain
Of its assum'd abasement. Mothers, chase
The sorceress from your haunts, and in her stead
Welcome the glorious archetype, heav'n-born,
Whose smile is beauty, and whose deeds are love.

As a capacious garden, richly spread
With fruits and flowers, the growth of happier climes,
While spring leads on the verdant hours, demands
The swain's incessant labour to defend
The frail exotics from protracted frost,
Damp mildew, or the insect-swarms who ride
The arid blasts which sweep Sarmatia's wastes,
Or Greenland's magazines of ice, the hoard
Of many a thousand winter. Nor remits
The gardener's care, tho' soft Favonius leads
More genial seasons, scattering from his lap

Garlands for Flora, for Pomona flowers
Pregnant with juicy fruit. Then liberal grows
Th' offensive weed, and chokes th' encumber'd soil.
Bent with redundant bloom, the slender stalk
Demands support, and the luxuriant shoot
Calls on the skilful pruner to correct
Its wild abundance. Through the winding paths
The admiring visitant walks, pleas'd to view
Order, and grace, and beauty. The brown swain,
Bent on his mattock, listens to this praise
With honest gratulation. Such delight
Warms the maternal bosom, when the dance,
The crowded gala, or, best seen, the bowers
Of private life, disclose the graceful charms
Of her fair daughters; fair as Amoret,
When in the lap of womanhood she sat*
Retir'd in conscious loveliness, and charm'd
The gallant Scudamore, ere Brusiane,
Fell spoiler, broke the bands of plighted love.

* Fairy Queen, Book 4. Canto 10. Stanza 52.

" How vast the mother's cares! how long her
Cries sighing indolence. Yet brace thy nerves, [toils!"
And gird thy mind to duty. Well perform'd,
Soon shall a willing partner at thy side
Rise diligent, relieve thy anxious pains,
Or yield to thee the solace failing health
And wasted strength require. Who now presides
O'er the still school? Some watchful genius wears
An elder sister's form; restraint and awe
Seem half relax'd, but tenderness prevails,
And kind entreaty, and remember'd claims
Of confidence most precious, fan the spark
Of latent emulation to a flame,
Vivid, yet genial. " See," observe the young,
" Our dearest sister's honours all obtain'd
By industry and rectitude. We, too,
Tutor'd by time and study, may, like her,
Become our mother's friend. Dear name! Best gift
Her kindness can bestow." Thus ruminate
The rosy pupils, as with added zeal

They con their tasks, or trace the flowing line.
The beauteous teacher, with benignant grace,
Impartial turns to each, reproves with pain,
Commends with rapture, and with kisses greets
The infant prattler, early brought to learn
Restraint, first law of discipline, and lisp
Its criss-cross row. But should some wayward girl,
Froward or fraudulent, compel appeal
To strict authority, all mild reproof,
All lenient measures vain,—with throbbing heart,
And cheek all wet with tears, the sister yields
To the just judge, determines to be firm,
And leads the culprit, pale through fear and shame,
To the maternal presence, tells the fault
She half excuses, begs but one reproof,
Hopes reformation, and with joy admits
The scant apology. Bending, she meets
A shy embrace with open arms, and vows
Love was the potent orator who rous'd
Reluctant anger. But, if stubborn still,

Impenitent, incorrigible, fix'd
In sullen pride, the bold offender scorns
Counsel or threat,—ere awful punishment
Bares her firm arm, th' accuser turns aside,
Hides with her hands the burst of generous wo,
And, what she dares not deprecate, deplores.

Thus, while the sword of pestilence or war
Unsheath'd, impends o'er an offending realm,
Weeps the commission'd angel to foresee
The chastisements of mercy: higher thoughts
Blend with these sad relentings, which conclude
In loud hosannas to the righteous Judge,
Who, like a pitying father, smites to save.

# SEPARATION FROM CHILDREN.

## ARGUMENT.

The sons' return home, after completing their education. A happy family living in domestic union. Such scenes frequent in former times. An old baron's household described. Savage life tends to strengthen the claims of kindred. Patriarchal manners. Domestic pursuits of yeomen, when the family joined to cultivate the common farm. Change of manners, younger sons being now obliged to seek other occupations. Home is then felt to be dear, and its delights unequalled, though its restraints were once irksome. The parent fixes the child's employment. Painful anticipation of the mother. Mutual pangs of separation. Retrospection of home in more advanced life. Maternal anxiety continues. Memory draws flattering perspectives. The mother's duty with respect to her sons is now limited to prayer and instruction. Feelings of a mother whose son attains distinguished eminence. Consolation of those who have only daughters. A mother's anxiety for them during the period of courtship. Portents of marriage. Description of a happy union. The mother must subdue her reluctance to part with a beloved daughter, and yield her former pre-eminence in her affections. Wisdom and mercy of Providence in providing for man successive attachments and connections. Consoling prospect of the veneration and love which a good mother's memory receives from her descendants.

## BOOK IV.

### SEPARATION FROM CHILDREN.

But while the well-train'd daughters thus improve
In years, in charms, in virtues, and forebode
Happy alliances, and large increase
Of honour to the parent-house, the sons,
Ripen'd to manly vigour, and endu'd
With learning and intrepid virtue, firm
As their congenial oaks, return to prop
Those lovely plants, who, like the woodbine, crave
Protection, and with honied sweets perfume
The stem round which their tendrils fondly twine.
And happy he, whose envied lot allows
Tranquil domestic joys—the social meal,
The evening festival, the morning lounge,
A smiling sister hanging on each arm,
Are his; his, too, the intellectual feast

Of confidential friendship, unrestrain'd
By jealousy, unchill'd by cold neglect,
Unwarp'd by rival interests. Best regale
Of pilgrim-man, while journeying to the realm
Where, in its native soil, this golden fruit
Swells with nectareous pulp; not, as on earth,
Austere and dwindling, like a southern plant
Transplanted to some rigid arctic clime.

Yet pause a while: the family of love,
Cultur'd by taste, by truth and virtue train'd,
Invite th' enamour'd Muse. Whether they wind
O'er hill and valley, culling herb and flower,
Or in the garden's shrubby pale enclos'd,
Pursue the blissful arts in Eden learn'd;
Here, as of old, the sons of Adam choose
The rougher part; they pulverize the soil,
Press on the loosen'd banks the massy roll,
Or bend with strenuous arms the osier-staves
To form the arbour, meditated scene

Of social joys. Round this thy daughters, Eve,
Entwine a verdant canopy, compos'd
Of every graceful climber. Fragrant here,
Clematis creeps, the prickly eglantine,
The jasmine and the woodbine, sweetest plant
That scents the breath of Flora. Or they deck
The shelter'd southern bank with vernal flowers,
To greet returning Phœbus, and compose
A May-day wreath. Here, too, when autumn chills
The dews of eve, their choice exotics brave
Awhile the tempest; pensile fuschia hangs
Her scarlet bloom, and coronilla shows
The cowslip-hue and soft perfumes of spring;
Th' odorous myrtle waves his snowy crest,
And anagalis to the dying year
Unfolds its purple flowers. Ev'n when without
The rough storm beats, still round the parlour-fire
A happy circle meet. Music, and song,
And study, nor abstract nor frivolous,
Labours of taste, or charity, or use,

Employ the day; and when the shutters close,
Stripp'd of his icy beard and furrow'd frown,
Old Hyems sits a palmer at the hearth,
Partakes the wassail goblet, and repeats
Sage chronicles, and saws, and legends wild;
Or, dearer still, recalls the sportive scenes
Of early life, the school-boy's stratagem,
The truant's dangerous scrape, the college-prank,
And every slight excess of buoyant youth,
When the warm pulse beats high, which prudent age,
Ev'n while it censures, pardons. Mid the scene,
The mother sits as priestess at the shrine
Of blameless joy, and, ere it swerves to ill,
Checks its exuberance. Every word of love
Swells her responsive heart; but should a cloud,
Transient and flecker'd as the misty veil
Which, mid the fervour of a summer's morn,
Flits lightly o'er the sun-beams, chill the glow
Of harmony most cordial, her mild eye
Reproves the offending child; and oft she quits

The circle for her oratory, there
To sanctify festivity with praise,
And, like th' Arabian patriarch *, supplicate
Her children may not in their feasts offend.

Time was such scenes were frequent, now denied,
Save to a happy few. The feudal lord
Reign'd in his castle, and his numerous sons,
The bulwarks of his ancient house, partook
The common banquet; at one manger fed
Their snorting chargers; in one banner'd hall
Their spears, and bows, and shields, and helmets hung.
Then, while the brother-chieftains, side by side,
Led forth their kindred vassals to the chase,
Or mightier game of war, graceful and grave
The noble matron to the chapel call'd
Her daughters and her handmaids, there to chaunt
Matins, and, kneeling, tell their holy beads,
Imploring for their valiant brothers fame,

* Job, 1st chapter, 5th verse.

Prosperity, and safety; for their foes
Confusion and destruction. Sinful prayer,
And unreceiv'd by Him, the common sire
Of all mankind. Yet thus affection knit
The strong, fraternal cord. Thus every house
Became a little monarchy, compos'd
Of children-citizens, and kindred slaves,
Distinguish'd from the world beside, which seem'd
A horde unknown of aliens or of foes.

Still lives to foes this strong hostility
Of blood, this close communion with the tribes
Who roam through Samojeda, or the wilds
Which stretch from Missisippi to the shores
Of Omalashka, where the new world bends
To meet her ancient partner, and reclose
The chasm made when the disjointed earth
Sank formless in a watery grave, till God
Call'd her anew to being, but deform'd
With precipices huge and gulfs profound,

Marks of her guilt and ruin. Where through wastes
Unbounded the Tartarean plunderer roves,
Or Indian hunter, savage as his game.
They rove in numerous families combin'd;
Tho' terrible to others, firmly knit
In kindred union to their clans they bear
The elk, or buffalo, or spotted pard,
Or the rich plunder of some caravan,
Journeying to China's mart. In purer times,
The fathers of mankind thus, mid a race
Sprung from their loins, liv'd blameless, king, and priest,
And parent of the numerous progeny
Whose tents were pitch'd around them. In the midst,
Beneath a lofty oak, the altar rose,
Hallow'd with daily sacrifice; the sire
There judg'd offences, or disclos'd the will
Of God, reveal'd in vision, or deriv'd
From sure tradition. Distant graz'd the herds,
Or panted in the blaze of Asia's noon,
Or ruminating, couch'd. At the near well

The handmaids rins'd their vests, or ground the meal,
Or bak'd the leaven'd dough, or seeth'd the kid
For meet repast; hard duties these, ere art
Assisted labour. But, in converse high,
Round the old patriarch sat his elder born,
Discoursing on the birth of time, then young,
And every miracle of Providence
By which the Highest nurtur'd feeble man—
Fall'n inexperienc'd to existence new,
Beset with danger, but by grace sustain'd.

Time was, Britannia, when thy fertile meads,
(And meads more fitted to sustain the wants
Of simple life nor Nile nor Ganges laves
In their long course), time was, those meads supplied
The honest yeoman, and the athletic brood
Sprung from his bed, with food and plain attire,
Bound of their humble prayers. The mother then,
A housewife sage, rose at the second cock,
And rous'd her slumbering daughters to provide

The needful wardrobe. Cheerful at their wheels
They caroll'd, till the bleat of weaning lambs,
Or low of kine with loaded udders, call'd
To other toils. Monotonous and slow
Dashes the churn; the loaded cheese-press groans;
Swift whirls, with lightning-speed, the noisy reel;
Some on the shaven grass-plot spread the web,
To court the bleaching winds. Part bear aloft
The tinkling brass to lure the swarming bees,
Or from the swampy moor, or elder-fence,
Cull fruits and flowers indigenous, design'd
For winter-stores. Nor fear'd they rougher toils,
But gave their beauty to the nipping gales,
Or blistering sun, what time the new-mown hay,
Or wheat maturely brown, summon'd their aid,
To share their brothers' tasks; then lighter far
Than when they rose at midnight to resist
The ravage of the flood, when southern blasts
Broke up the stubborn magazines of ice,
And swell'd the mountain-torrents with a storm

Of sleet and hail; yet through that storm they rush'd,
And in the swelling inundation plung'd,
To drive their shivering kine to pastures safe.
Theirs also was the toil to seek their flocks
In deep ravines, where, shelter'd from the wind,
The harmless people couch'd, till o'er their heads
The drifting snow pil'd gradual; patient there
They ruminated, till their guardian swains,
Led by their dogs' sagacious bark, explor'd
And freed the captives, bearing in their arms
The feeblest to the sheep-cot, shelter'd warm,
And with dry fodder stor'd. In spring those swains
Twirl'd the incessant flail, or hew'd the oak,
Or through the stubborn glebe, with strenuous arm,
Slow urg'd the glittering share. In rural arts
Pre-eminently skill'd, the hardy youths
Cherish'd no loftier aims. 'Twas their discourse,
Who best could throw the level swath, who guide
The sickle most adroitly, or dispose
In regular arrangement, neat and firm,

The pyramidal rick, alike in form
To Egypt's ancient wonders, slowly rais'd
By groaning slaves to posthumous renown,
And vain ambition. More important far
These trophies of abundance, magazines
Of agricultural wealth, still largely pil'd
In Britain, tho' the manners of her swains,
" Ah ! piteous work of mutability*,"
Loos'd from the ties which to one home, one task,
One interest, the laborious brethren bound,
Preserve their old simplicity no more.

Now comes the period when the younger sons
Must quit their father's house, whether it rose
In proud manorial grandeur, to o'erlook
Valley, and wood, and hill, subjected all
To its command; or to the village spire
Contiguous, its white railing, garden trim,
And library well stor'd, bespoke th' abode

* Spenser.

Of contemplative taste—the man of God,
Who feeds the flock committed to his charge
Duly; or elegant recluse, retir'd
From toils of active life. Whether, fond boy,
The home time calls thee to relinquish yields
These higher joys, or yon strong mansion, built
In former ages by the knight or lord
For dowager or spinster, where still grow
Tall obelisks of holly, box, and yew,
Disclaiming innovation; and within
The massy beams, the windows cas'd with stone,
The open chimney, and the spacious hall,
Spite of the carpets and the painted chairs,
Confess primeval manners, ek'd and flounc'd
By modern luxury. If this abode,
Seat of rude plenty and obstreperous mirth,
First gave thee being, sacred is the name
Of home, and dear its joys. Ah! where is found
Such shelter as the father's roof; where friend
Kind, like the mother; where delights like those

Tasted when life was young, when buoyant joy
Leap'd forth, dispos'd with every living thing
To gambol, till exhausted weariness
Impos'd reluctant slumbers, sweet, profound,
Ending at morn's first ray? Then blithly rose
The sprightly boy, to finish some design,
Mischievous half, yet of invention keen,
And energy prophetic. Oft amid
The banishments by wise instruction's laws
Enforc'd, the school-boy, listless to his task,
Ponders the joys of home—the hazel copse,
Where first he found the bullfinch, the clear stream,
Where crimson-spotted trout and minnows play'd,
The level lawn on which he chas'd his bowl,
Or pitch'd his nine-pins; every dear delight
Of summer-evenings, when, high pois'd in air,
The paper-kite, envy of village lads,
Majestically soar'd. He counts the hours
Which shall restore these blessings, when again
The rosy holydays, on cherub wings*

* See a Fairy Tale, by Mrs. Talbot, published with her Essays,

Arriving, shall conduct him to the scene
Of all his joys. Rover shall lick his hand;
His favourite poney willingly sustain
Its joyful lord; soon the paternal gates
Shall open, soon within a mother's arms
His heart shall pant with rapture, while he hears
His wish'd improvements prais'd. From his swoll'n eye
He wipes the tear, arouses all his powers,
As to th' Homeric song or Virgil's page,
Dropp'd from his hand, renew'd attention turns.

Yet when harsh discipline, or sharp restraint,
Goads the free spirit at that patriot age,
When every wish is liberty, the soul
Eager anticipates the golden hours
Of self-command, and meditates vast scenes
Of enterprise, and fair success, and fame,
Till a new world, well modell'd, seems to rise
In vision, like the fairy-palaces
Magnificent, attendant on the call
Of an enchanter's rod. Home then appears

Armida's tower*, where captive Tancred lay,
While fierce Argantes through the Christian camp
Destruction spread, and Godfrey vainly call'd
His absent champion, who, by magic bonds,
Was chain'd from high emprise. How tedious, then,
Appear its stinted services! How mean
Its calm security! At length the hour
Arrives of manumission. On the stream
Of life his bark shall rush, with pendants gay,
An inexperienc'd, sanguine voyager,
Hast'ning to isles of bliss, and mines of gold.
Good speed attend thee; and may hope and joy
Still man thy shrouds, while prudence steers thy helm!

For after long debate, revolving oft
The properest guardian, and the surest path
To honour, or emolument, or fame,
Or to those humbler views, sufficiency
And peace, paternal love at length appoints

* Tasso's Jerusalem, Book 7th.

(As far as finite mortal can appoint)
The fortunes of the boy. Not rashly chos'n,
Fix'd without wisdom, and capricious chang'd
As levity directs, but gravely weigh'd,
To talents, habits, character, and health
Best suited; nor o'erlook'd that higher view,
Which in the frail inhabitant of earth
Discerns the future citizen of heaven,
And guards th' immortal franchise. Awful trust!
Which nature's, reason's, and religion's voice
Bestow on parents, to allot each child
Its future destination—rightly use
The delegated confidence, for heaven
Requires most strict account. Perverse designs
Of cunning worldlings, cruel tyranny,
Stubborn inflexibility of will,
Deaf to intreaty; prejudice, or spleen,
Must not be pleaded at that awful bar.

The hour of trial is arriv'd, long fear'd
By the fond mother, who, in privacy,

Bath'd her pale cheek with tears, and humbly pray'd
Celestial benediction, while her hands,
Busied in Martha's toils, selected aught
Of use, or comfort, or delight, to sooth
The wanderer's future wants. Want till that hour
He never knew, which kindness could relieve,
Or care anticipate; but stranger-hands
Must now perform those offices, to love
Most dear; and stranger-hearts, with feelings cold,
Fulfil the stinted service justice claims,
Once paid by love with vast munificence,
Outgoing obligation. Will he find
A friendly breast, to which his treasur'd woes
May be confided, where his aching head,
Leaning, may find repose? His fever'd lip
Who now shall moisten with the cooling cup,
Or heal with draughts medicinal? The couch
Of restless pain who shall compose, or (task
More difficult) administer reproof
To headlong indiscretion, temper'd sweet

With tenderness ineffable, till tears
Awake the scorpions of remorse? For love
Pains more than anger, by its chastisements,
A heart susceptible of generous shame,
And grateful recollection. He who stood
Firm and unyielding while the pedagogue
Brandish'd his rod, who, with disdainful air,
Endur'd the menace of opprobrious rage,
Has melted to behold his mother's eye
Mildly expostulate; has felt her sighs
Than stripes more agonizing; and has fear'd
Expulsion from that safe retreat, her arms,
Worse than the furies academic lore
Plants round her hallow'd grove, from theft profane
To guard her laurels. Will the busy world
Stop in the chase of avarice or fame
To mark a stripling stranger, and explain
The latent characters of soul which speak
A mind not stubborn, but determin'd, brave
To high courageous daring, yet dispos'd

To grateful yearnings, pitiful and kind,
Artless in manner, and averse to own
Its own deserts? Ah, no! hid in the shell
Of rough demeanour, careless, unconstrain'd,
Th' untasted fruit of rich integrity
Will shrivel unperceiv'd. Yet did she spare
No culture to induce the golden growth
Of courtesy and winning grace. Alas!
Was the soil barren, or did anxious love
Look for the fruit before the blossom swell'd?

So in her closet, meditating sad,
The mother reasons, while a sombrous cloud,
Gradual succeeding the effulgent glow
Of hope, o'er the adventurer's youthful cheek
In pallid silence steals. Again he pats
His darling Rover, visits yet again
Each favour'd haunt, bids a renew'd adieu
To the old nurse, his confident, or hind,
Who hid the lapses of his boyish hours,

And shar'd his hoarded apples. Now he parts
Among his playmates keepsakes, be they spoils
Torn from the plunder'd wanderers of air,
Marbles or tops, the wicket and the bat,
Each token of adroitness, precious late,
And with regret resign'd. His sadden'd heart
Feels these divestments; and the world unknown,
So beauteous once, looks blank, a naked void
Of each delight, to habit or to love
Most dear. But at the door the neighing steed
Gives summons dire. He turns: Is this a time
For weak irresolution? "Yet to view
A mother's tears, and bid farewel. O task
Impossible! Will not to-morrow's dawn
Conduct her to my pillow, to inquire
If I am well, or chide my sluggishness?
To-morrow's sun will rise, but from that voice
And smile, than day more cheerful, I forlorn
Shall rove in banishment. O most belov'd,
Most honour'd! Is she silent? Does she fear

Her sorrows will unman me that she checks
Her faltering voice, nor washes with one tear
The parting kiss, while on my head her hand
Is press'd in benediction, and her eyes
Rais'd in mute awe to heaven. Farewel!" 'Tis spoke,
And forth he rushes. Now unsluic'd his griefs,
Long painfully restrain'd, in torrents burst,
Soon check'd by decent pride, as with a speed
That speaks his diffidence, he eager posts
Along the destin'd road, and fears to turn;
Till from the summit of the hill, whose bourne
Shuts from his view that bower of bliss by him
So lov'd, he pauses, takes a parting look
Of the dear hamlet; cottage, field, and grove
Decyphering, and the lares, social powers,
Who people every hearth, for every hearth
Is hallow'd then, and innocence and joy
Bound o'er those fields. He gazes till his eyes
Ache with impassion'd vision. What! no more
Must he return? "Yes," soothing hope replies,

" Thou shalt return, laden with wealth and fame
And thy return shall be a festival
Of gratulating bliss, a holyday
Of social transport. But go, first pursue
The path which duty points." Sighing, he yields,
And speeds his pilgrimage along the vale.

So on the top of fountful Pisgah stood
Moses, the man of God, who faithful led
The wandering tribes, permitted thence to view
That rest so long desir'd, and now denied
By special interdiction, for his sin
At Meribah. The palms of Jericho
He saw, and Jordan, like a silver line
Parting the realm of Sihon from the lot
Of Benjamin. O'er Sibma, rich in vines
And flowers, he glanc'd, to where the utmost sea
Wash'd Dan and Ephraim. On the south he saw
Th' Asphaltic lake, dire monument of wrath
Eternal, and the heights of Lebanon,

Whose cedars seem'd to touch the bending clouds,
Skirted his northern view. Such wond'rous pow'r
Of vision God afforded, to console
Him he in love rebuk'd. Ere call'd to die,
He saw thee, promis'd Canaan, fertile then
Beyond all other lands; and once again
Did he behold thee, when on Tabor's top
Glorious he stood, and communed with Him,
Seen in the burning bush, of whom he spake,
Prophetical Messiah, come to lead
Lost Israel to the ever-during rest
Of heav'nly Canaan.

*May that rest be thine,*
*Young wanderer!* and thy earthly father's house,
Thy mother's fondness, and the social joys
Fraternal friendship yielded, be supplied
(Thy mortal journey done) by the large courts
Of thy eternal sire, whose love transcends
A mother's; there, in fellowship most pure,

Mayst thou embrace thy brethren, the redeem'd,
Gather'd from every people, clime, and age.

Yet, though the path of active business, strewn
Profuse with festering thorns, till scarce appears
Pleasure's alluring rose, sternly commands
Attention, like a station'd centinel
To watch his hour, till happily dismiss'd
To sleep long wish'd; affection then shall wake,
Restoring to his view his early joys—
The casual luxuries economy
Allow'd on festivals, the wise restraints
Which made indulgence happiness, the bliss
Of leisure slighted once. How exquisite
Does leisure seem to tossing weariness,
When the worn intellect and feverish frame
Refuse the rest they crave. Then shall return
Visions of early, unimpassion'd life,
Ere vain desire, like the curs'd Danaides,
From avarice or ambition's fountains drew

Waters of discontent in broken urns,
Ere tasted, lost. Such is the lot of him
Who to those turbid streams alone applies.

Perchance, meanwhile to solitude resign'd,
The mother muses on her absent boy,
Paints every danger, contumely, wrong,
Or sorrow he may feel. Whether beneath
Thy naval or thy martial banner plac'd
Britannia, he with honest zeal contends
For thy insulted rights, thy slander'd fame,
And menac'd empire in far distant climes,
Scorch'd by hot winds, by icy rigours chill'd,
Tossing on stormy seas, by famine pinch'd,
Groaning in sickness or captivity;
Whether he braves the tempest which o'erwhelms
Empires and potentates, manners and laws;
Or shelter'd in Astrea's last retreat,
This guarded isle, he shares life's common ills,
The monitors and heritage of man;

Still with anticipating cares, more swift
Than wing'd misfortune, with alarming doubts
As malice vigilant, and sympathies
Than actual pain more piercing, more acute
Than the cold chills of wo, maternal love
Hovers round him whom hard necessity
From her endear'd embrace reluctant tore.

As in a summer's eve, when every gale
Reposes, and tranquillity enrobes
The western landscape, glowing in the beams
Of the declining sun, and studded rich
With mountains, woods, and farms, castles, and towers,
And grazing herds; the limpid lake reflects
The scene more beautiful in fairy pride;
Mountains, and woods, and farms, and castles rise
On the charm'd eye with softer hue, arrang'd
In groups more graceful. Thou, too, memory,
Canst, like the peaceful Naiad, gently draw
Thy silver pencil o'er elaps'd delights,

Till all is magic loveliness. Array'd
In every virtue, every fault disguis'd,
Oft on the day-dreams of affection steals
The god of her idolatry; his form
Is grace, his visage beauty, all his deeds
Benignity, and all his accents truth;
Till, like distracted Constance*, she exclaims,
" There ne'er was such a gracious creature born,
But the rude world will spoil him, care will dig
Deep furrows on his open brow, and grief
Fade on his cheek the rose. Nor long will hope
O'er his elastic frame a spirit breathe
Etherial. When the toil-worn man obtains
Short holyday from labour's prison-house,
He'll come to these embraces, faded, cold,
Gloomy, and tending earthward. Never, never
Shall I behold my pretty Arthur more."
Turn, self-tormentor, glorying in thy skill
To barb and poison sorrow's dart; O turn
From criminal regrets, and idle fears,

* King John, act 3d, scene 3d.

To hopes and duties, acquiescence calm,
And confidence serene. Still round thy child
Eternal love keeps vigil. Is his path
Dangerous? The golden hairs which shade his brow
Are number'd all. Does envy haunt his step?
" Envy is merit's shade *," the useful check
Of pride high-soaring. In the arduous field
Of conflict he shall learn what love like thine
Imparts not. Youth must change its silken robe
For manhood's mail, or russet, and explore
Regions beyond its home-bound scenery,
Tho' now no Spartan lawgiver prescribes
The year of prime, to bind on stripling arms
The patriotic buckler, nor does youth
Drop in the forum his pretextile vest,
And o'er his limbs the manly toga fold.

Henceforth the mother o'er her absent sons
Must yield the curb of rule; but active love

" * Envy does merit as its shade pursue."
Pope's Essay on Man.

Turns monitor; or, like the guardian saint
In Romish legends, blasphemously deck'd
With attributes divine, offers for them
Morning and even the christian sacrifice
Of prayer, breath'd from a lowly heart contrite,
Yet confident of mercy: for she prays,
Not for the warrior's plumage, nor the hoards
Of unimparted wealth; nor yet for fame,
Idol of towering minds. If she requests
Prosperity, 'tis meekly; if she asks
For health, 'tis with submission to His will,
Who round the couch of sickness stations oft
Celestial comforters, and through the wounds
Of pain pours unguents, balmy to the soul,
More deeply gash'd by sin. In prayer she seeks
Riches unperishing, not earthly wreaths,
Or fading honours, but immortal crowns;
Not freedom from distemper, but a life
Beyond time's bound extended; not to pass
A day of fourscore years in worldly joys,
Envied and flatter'd, cheated and traduc'd,

(Such the brief history experience tells
Of human happiness) but to survive
The ruin of creation, to possess
Permanent bliss in full security,
To be belov'd of angels, and to hear
From Him, whose presence is beatitude,
This summons to eternal rest, " Well done,
Servant belov'd, come share thy Master's joy."

Nor blame the mother, who, if splendid parts
And vast acquirements, various, rich, profound,
Wisdom and truth, integrity and zeal,
Meet for the common welfare, or the praise
Of Him we serve—treasures by nature dealt
With spare economy; if gifts like these,
United in her noble offspring, join
Their rare effulgence, O! condemn her not,
Though she should supplicate with all the warmth
A patriot or a doting parent feels,
That fortune's sun may dissipate the mists
Of poverty, and give his mighty mind

Space for his pure ambition, holy, high,
Just in its means, and generous in its aims.

Nor wonder if, her ardent prayer fulfill'd,
She sits in modest privacy retir'd,
And gazes on his glory. Unalarm'd
By envy's hell-born imps, who fix their fangs
On his ascending greatness, she beholds
His dangers and his fame, reads his great deeds
In the glad eyes of myriads, hears the voice
Of nations chaunt his eulogy, not set
To measur'd strains, not the cold fulsome verse
Venality inscribes to pow'r, but words
Of sober truth and temper'd praises, breath'd
By hoary sages, independent bards,
And warriors seam'd with honour's beauteous scar.
When such unite their pœans to applaud
The patriot's steady course; when one bless'd isle,
Sav'd from contention's uproar, stands a shrine
For peace and freedom, charity and truth,

Such attestations, while they truly note
Transcendant virtue, form the guerdon high
That crowns her toils. Poor are Golconda's mines,
Poor are the yielded sceptres of the world,
To her high aspirations, which demand
A nation's welfare, and a nation's love!

And didst thou, Britain, 'mongst thy statesmen rank
One uncorrupted thus, and fortunate
In his first aim; and midst thy matrons chaste,
Devout and faithful as the prophetess
Who in the temple sought her infant-lord?
Hadst thou a widow'd mother, sprung from blood
Illustrious, and in spotless union bound
To him who tore the naval wreath of Spain,
And humbled martial tyranny and Gaul?
Consort of Britain's Chatham, I revere
Thy lot pre-eminent. Mother of him,
Who, rising as his father's orb declin'd,
Show'd in his dawn full splendour, and rush'd forth,

Rejoicing in his mighty power, to save
The people he espous'd. His genial rays
Fell e'en on those who curs'd him at the hearths
Guarded by him with safety's triple mound,
Where, bless'd with liberty, they grateful mark'd
The triumphs of oppression. Happiest thou
Of mothers, when the storm-beat statesman sought
Thy arms, best refuge from a clamorous world!
Then thy kind smile refresh'd his weary soul,
And brac'd him to new labours. In thy groves,
Unvex'd by spleen, he ponder'd future schemes
Of England's glory, commerce, wealth, and fame,
Soothing thy pains with visions of renown,
Thy much-lov'd country's meed. Still to thy age
He gave the stinted leisure he denied
To folly's haunts, or pleasure's guilty bow'rs.
His greatness and his love, with blended beams,
Illum'd thy locks time-honour'd, till beside
His sire in dust they rested. Britain, then,
Claim'd undivided the exalted heart,

Long with a mother shar'd. E'en in thy death
Bless'd was thy lot, call'd heav'nward while his arm
Had strength to prop thy dying head, his voice
Pow'r to console thee, and his pious hands
Firmness to close thine eyes; ere yet his frame,
Worn by incessant toil, refus'd the task
Sternly impos'd by his unconquer'd soul,
Where all the Roman, all the christian * shone.

Rare was thy lot, O mother of the friend
Britain must long deplore! Go, shew thy son
To the bright host of angels, habitants
Of purer worlds, where virtue, tried no more,
Triumphs for ever. In this toilsome world
Few through the labyrinth of public life
With "unblenched honour" walk. Ambition delves
A mine for av'rice, while her painted lures

* The last moments of Mr. Pitt, as described by the Bishop of Lincoln, demonstrate that he clearly understood, and truly revered, the principles of our holy religion.

Lead vanity to danger's precipice,
To foes a taunting proverb of reproach,
A grief to kindred, and to friends a shame.

And thou, whose prayers ungranted vainly ask
Male issue to support an ancient house,
Lament not though thy cheeks have never glow'd,
Flush'd by a son's renown. Reflect thy heart
Hath never yearn'd in anguish for his wrongs,
Nor felt the wound incurable, disgrace
Gives the maternal bosom, while it goads
With scorpion lashes the detected knave,
The venal statesman, or the coward-chief.

Nor envy thou her lot, whose fruitful womb
Nurtur'd an infant-hero. Seest thou not
How pale her cheeks? Long watchings made them pale;
While many a night sad fancy chain'd her soul
To danger's coursers, hurrying her along
Through battles, sieges, storms, with him she lov'd.

Lift the green laurels which a grateful realm
Bind round her brows, and thou wilt see they hide
Deep furrows, grav'd by care. Observe her kneel
Beneath the waving banner, glorious pledge
Of victory, and thou mayst see her sighs
Lift its proud folds, to tell thee she forebodes
New perils to her darling; for her arms
Must ne'er detain him whom his country's voice
Again invites to dangers and to fame.

O bless that heaven, which bade thy duties walk
In paths more tranquil, while beneath thine eyes
The gentle forms of female innocence
Gradual mature; nor intermit thy cares!
There may thy labours reap more certain fruit,
Proportion'd to thy culture and thy skill.
Chief be those labours trebled at the hour
When sportive Cupid makes the female heart
The mark of cruel archery. Around
Gay, unfledg'd beauty, flitting from her nest,

Gambols the coxcomb-daw; and o'er her head
The kite, foul ravisher, in guileful wheels
Observant sails, and points her for his prey;
While the deluded victim plumes her pride
With his mock reverence. Now comes the time
When caution and experience, matrons sage,
Shall be regarded as two gossip-crones,
Met to malign Lothario, though his mien,
His gay habiliments, and courteous speech,
Bespeak his virtues, like his form, divine.
Now comes the time when fancy, us'd to smile
At love-tales, shall turn serious, and discern
They are most pitiful; when gay content,
Wont to point scornful at the desperate maid
Who angled on a beetling precipice
For Clodio's callous heart, till her own peace
Sunk irremediable in depths of wo,
Shall deem such conquest feasible, and point
Her small artillery-glances, shot from eyes
With silken fringes shaded, ambuscades

Of smiles, and becks, and pretty frowardness,
Which o'er the face of conscious beauty glide
Like lucid clouds o'er Cynthia: all to win
That tower, the heart of man, impregnable,
Save when inverting fable Danaë chang'd
Gains in a shower of gold reluctant Jove.

From beauty's open'd blossom to its prime
Let fond maternal vigilance on guard
Sit patient. These are hours of high import,
Which, on the future, stamp the deep impress
Of evil or of good indelible:—
As we from evening learn the coming day,
And in a night portending storms behold
Sol on his western couch, o'er-canopied
With vapours murky purple, sullen red,
And dusky grey, in turbid grandeur roll'd,
Changing at every glance, while far above,
Like snowy mountains, rise the clouds convolv'd,
With rain or tempest charg'd. Unlike the scene

When glorious Phœbus with resplendent hues
Blazons his setting car; o'er half the heavens,
Reflected from the east, a splendour glows
Vivid, yet tranquil, of supernal worlds
It seems an antepast, enkindling hope
Of fruitful seasons, and of rural joy.
Thus ominous, round Hymen's altar float
Portents, by love maternal well discern'd,
Who, like Cassandra, tells the sure event,
In vain predicted, and too late deplor'd;
When he who fawn'd turns tyrant, and reveals
His latent self, false, treacherous, severe,
Jealous of rule, yet most unmeet for power,
Vices late gloss'd by courtesy o'erstrain'd,
Or mock hilarity, the gala-garb
Of sad remorse, long us'd in moody rage
To tear its russet gabardine at home.

Happy the maid who holds in silken bands
A generous heart, by fortune unallur'd,

By female arts unvanquish'd! Happy, too,
The mother who beholds, in kindred souls,
Congenial virtues waken mutual love!
Her anxious labours, wishes, pray'rs, and hopes,
Tended to this; for this she gave her hours
Industrious, building firm the structure fair
Of grace, and beauty, and immortal truth.
Come, then, enjoy thy labour; come, and crown
With Hymen's wreaths thy child! Content, resign
Pre-eminence in that soft heart where late
Thou wast supremely lov'd. Forbear to mourn,
Tho' the dear partner of thy summer-walks
And winter-musings, giv'n to other cares,
Gilds with brief visits the secluded bow'r,
Where thou sitt'st lonely, praying for her weal,
Or fashioning some household web, design'd
To ease her duties. Hospitable zeal
Shall be the harbinger of her approach,
And love and transport the young cherubs hail
Whom she shall lead to print thy faded cheek

With rosy kisses. Jealousy, avaunt!
Shame not a mother's noble tenderness,
Tho' the soft glances of connubial love,
From thy pale brow reverting with a sigh,
Seek solace in the fond protecting glance
Of him thy daughter's wedded lord, whose arm
Shall stay her fainting steps, when she attends
Thy honour'd relics to the house of death,
And hears thy requiem chauntèd. What shall call
Her fluttering spirits from the grave, to which,
As to a sealed casket, she entrusts
Thy sacred form, save a lov'd husband's voice,
Or wailings of her infant-babes, who shriek
Because their mother mourns? O! rather lift
Thy voice, and praise the wisdom which assigns
To perishable man successive loves,
To sooth him when the guardians of his youth
Assume their robes immortal. Thus he grows,
Not like deciduous trees in northern climes,
Through whose bare branches howls the winter-storm,

But like the golden orange in the groves
Of Lusitania, or th' Idumean palm,
The opening blossoms and the ripen'd fruit
Loading at once his bending boughs. O man,
Favour'd of Providence, and truly blest,
If in these riches of domestic love
Thine eye discerns the mercy which supplies
What thy frail state and varying wants require!

And blessed, too, the mother who has taught
In early life her children to obtain
Those fruits of paradise, which ev'n on earth
Yield nutriment divine—religious hope,
And holy peace, and pious gratitude.
For this, while with the ashes of her sires
Her withering form dissolves, ages unborn
Shall nurse th' implanted virtues of her stock,
And with her features, fortune, name, possess
Her angel-dower of moral excellence,
And Christian sanctity; gifts which the worm,

Destroyer foul, consumes not, nor the rust
Of time devours. Beside the marble bust
Which marks where venerable goodness waits
Th' archangel's call, tradition loves to sit
And chronicle her deeds; while round her tomb
Stand her descendants, taught from infancy
To lisp her honour'd name, fondly to gaze
On the priz'd semblance of her gracious form,
The heir-loom of their honours, and to prize
Relics of taste, or industry, or art,
Fruits of well-hoarded hours. For, while her mind
Her higher cares contemplated, her hands
Pursu'd Arachne's toils. Those higher claims
Speak in the record of her blameless life,
Trac'd by her pen in modest characters,
Inscrib'd to those she lov'd *. Holy and pure
Is thy remembrance, virtue, though renown
Plant laurels on the warrior's grave, and wreaths
With bay the slumbering bard—the mother's urn

* Alluding to the letters of Lady Rachel Russel.

Shall claim more dear memorials; gratitude
Shall there abide; affection, reverence there
Shall oft revolve the precepts which now speak
With emphasis divine. The pious tear
(For tears must fall) like heavenly dew shall nurse
A growth immortal. For thy mandate, death,
Which o'er the separating waters calls
The Christian mother, hallows while it ends
Her blessed toils, seen in the fair renown
Of those she fed with wisdom. Sooth'd and charm'd
By visions grateful to maternal pride,
She who, inspir'd by poignant feeling, chaunts
A lay to mothers welcome, drops her lyre
To muse upon a plain sepulchral stone
O'er her own ashes laid, and the dear forms,
Who, bending, wash it with their filial tears.

# MATERNAL SORROWS.

## ARGUMENT.

Address to Spring. That season renews the remembrance of early friends. Poetical disappointments. Invocation to Fancy, requiring her to describe maternal sorrows. Death of an amiable daughter in childbirth. Long protracted sufferings of one who languishes under a hopeless disease. Death of a widow's son by fever; of two brothers of different characters and fortunes by consumption. Sorrow may take a more painful shape than death. Anguish of the mother of a courtezan. Similar distress of one reduced to poverty by a spendthrift-son. Portrait of an aged mother who educates her grandchildren, orphans of an officer. Story of a mother who attended an amiable daughter through the miseries incident to an imprudent and clandestine engagement, which ended in insanity. Grief of a lady for an only son who fell in battle. Dreadful anxiety of those who know not the fate of their children, instanced in the parents of the crew of the Grosvenor, of those who fell into the hands of Hyder Ally, and those who were massacred at Ceylon. Address to Britain to attend to the religious improvement of her foreign possessions. Beneficial effects of such a measure. A mother's terrors would thus be lessened for the safety of her sons who embark on distant expeditions. Secure state of domestic society, when Christianity is universal. Old age and death of the mother of a virtuous family: probably may be changed into a guardian-angel. Conclusion.

## BOOK V.

### MATERNAL SORROWS.

As, by short rest refresh'd, the woodland hind
Strikes the firm oak with repercussive blows
More vigorous, thus the weary Muse suspends,
And thus renews her toils. Long time she watch'd
Spring's lingering chariot, who, with timid hand,
Slow braided her faint garlands, while her realm,
Wasted by winter, mourn'd: the lengthen'd hours
Refus'd to chase the tyrant, who still call'd
His sleety hail, his eastern blights, his storms
Of snow, o'erwhelming in one dazzling waste
Creation, burying deep fodder and flock,
Calamitous to thriftless husbandry,
To gay imagination's fairy host
Destructive; for nor Pisces nor the Ram
Allow'd one genial glow, and Taurus pac'd
O'er half his circuit, ere his starry horns

Pierc'd the cold vapours. Oft I ask'd the sun,
Art thou the same bright substance now thou hang'st
On Hyems' car a glittering isicle,
As when exhausted mortals, mid the reign
Of burning Sirius, pant beneath thy beams?
At length those beams burst forth, with carol loud
Of birds, with low of grateful flocks, with flowers
Impatient rising from their frost-bound beds.
Nature salutes the day-star, and invokes
Exulting man to give her raptures tongue.
Eager he rushes to his rural toils,
Impracticable late; the glittering share
O'er the brown fallow glides in measur'd rows;
The vegetable stores for beast and man
Strike their firm roots in the nutritious earth,
And court the balmy gales which round thy throne,
O Spring! dance jocund. Dear is thy return;
Welcome, sweet May! thy wreaths*; for now thou
As in thy ancient pomp, the fruitful bride [com'st,

* Written during the remarkable May of 1808.

Of happy Greece, or Sicily renown'd,
When nymphs and shepherds to the Dorian pipe
Danc'd, and with flowers adorn'd thy mimic queen.
O long desir'd and lovely! at thy call
Nature spontaneous quickens into leaf,
Herbage, and floral bloom. Each day, each hour,
She doffs her sombrous hue. Now the swoll'n bud
But scarcely tints the hawthorn hedge; but soon
In ample vegetation she invests
The sycamore umbrageous, and the oak,
Monarch of woods, who waits till he beholds
His naked subjects clad, ere he assumes
His proud regalia. Hail, benignant May!
For now thou com'st not wayward, but with smiles
Of sunny warmth, and gently dropping tears,
And balmy sighs, seeking to heal the wounds
Thy elder sisters gave the mourning earth.
Let universal love now hymn the reign
Of universal beauty, hill and lawn
Confess her power, the chaunt of nightingales,

And the lark's carol echo it aloud!
Nor storms nor dangers now invade the reign
Of evening, under whose grey awning rove
The lover and the poet, each entranc'd
In ecstasies, the scorn of grosser souls.
Light journeys northward; now her radiant car
Scarce dips in th' arctic wave, the bright reflex
Pierces the curtain'd tent where darkness lies,
And shooting upward to the pole-star, warms
Gelid Arcturus, and the twinkling state
Of thron'd Cassiope. Far in the south
The envious moon mourns her diminish'd reign,
Complaining Phœbus has usurp'd the night;
Nor waits he now till morning's dewy hand
Sprinkles with pearls his ringlets, ere he hastes
To pale his sister's splendours. Like the moon,
Pensive and sad, I sicken at the blaze
Of summer's pomp etherial; for she notes
Another year stolen from the brief extent
Of my frail being, on whose laps'd events

I gaze, as from a hill some traveller
Looks on the cities, mountains, plains, or fens,
His pilgrim-feet have trod to pass no more.
Thus over half a century I muse
Pensive, of many a toilsome hour demand
Its tribute, while with bitter tears I trace
The evanescent forms of faded joys,
Sitting like phantoms o'er the numerous graves
Of former friendships, of attachments dear,
Treasures of early youth, ere interest chill'd
Th' impassion'd heart, and bade it speculate
Before it lov'd. Autumnal life affords
No fruits like these; but many a death-storm* rose,
And swept the blossoms, whose luxuriance seem'd
To promise mellow hangings to my age,
And vigour to my Muse. For she could sing
Deftly, when partial Lycid lingering hung
O'er her quaint harp, attun'd the chord, and smil'd,

* "The death-storm rose, and swept her to the tomb."—
William Spencer's Year of Sorrow.

Inspiring hope, or, with congenial strains,
Awoke to ecstasy the song he lov'd.
Ah! when she struck that harp, with cypress crown'd,
O'er Lycid's grave *, or learn'd the minstrel's song,
By him so valued, in the silent halls
Of Arundel, what audience met she? None.
Fashion beheld the hearse of matchless worth
Glide by unnotic'd, and Alicia mourn'd
Her father's crimes to cold, unpitying hearts.
Nor Sparta's lofty matron, when she bound
The cuirass on her panting boy, receiv'd
The tears of British mothers, call'd to yield
Their darlings to like toils. No radiant dreams
Of fame's bright palaces, immortal wreaths,
Or tuneful praise, now sooth me. Round my brow
The night-shade creeping sheds th' effluvia dire
Of envy or of spleen, to thee, sweet Muse,
Deadly; and o'er the lay unheard, unlov'd,

* The poems here alluded to are in the 3d volume of this author's poems and plays.

The numbing poppy of oblivion steals,
Fatal alike to songstress and to song.

O bard of plaintive Mulla, to whose pipe
The graces danc'd*, crowning with flowers the maid
Much honour'd with thy love, didst thou complain—
Thou who, high seated in the gorgeous shrine
Of phantasy, delightest every age—
Didst thou complain that virtue and the Muse
Should be despis'd by those themselves had rais'd
To eminence; who, like some aged tree,
Spreading their wide circumference, suffer none
To thrive beneath their boughs†!" O gentle bard!
Not happier now the Muse's doom; the oak
Not only smothers saplings, but denies
The gadding woodbine round his trunk to throw
Her tendrils weak, and ask support from storms.

* Spenser's Fairy Queen, Book 6th, Canto 10th.

† The lines quoted are in Spenser's Poem on the Ruins of Time, and allude to the neglect and injurious treatment which

Kings of the Delphian grove, our lofty bards
Disdainful note the humbler worshippers
Of Phœbus, tho' they decorate his shrine
With garlands of vale-lilies, cull'd beside
Th' Aonian fount, and wet with sacred dew.

Come, then, imagination, and involve
In thy dark stole my theme! Marshal in pomp
The congregated sorrows that arise
To blast a mother's labours; envy, fraud,
The base seducer, the perfidious friend,
The wily enemy, th' oppressor stern,

he received from Lord Burleigh, after the death of Sir Philip Sidney. It seems difficult to speak of an enemy in more candid terms, or to utter a more harmless imprecation.

" O grief of griefs! O gall of all good hearts!
To see that virtue should despised be
By those who first were rais'd by virtue's parts,
And now broad spreading like an aged tree,
Let none shoot up that near them planted be.
O let not those of whom the Muse is scorn'd,
Alive or dead, be by the Muse adorn'd."

Forget not, for along the path of life
Like ravening wolves they prowl. Bring, too, the train
Of poverty; bring unsuccessful toil,
Neglected virtue, and defeated hope.
Nor yet omit the canker'd produce sown
By him, man's enemy, in hearts prepar'd
For the good seed of grace. O grief most sharp
To her indeed a mother! Chiefly call
The army of disease, and death its king,
Riding triumphant o'er the fallen race
Of Adam, vanquish'd by his scythe-arm'd car.

Come, strew with flowers the bridal-path, and wake
The village-bells, to tell with merry peals
Maria's nuptials*, lovely, chaste, and young;
Nobly descended, royally allied,
A widow'd mother's comforter and friend,
Of Waldegrave's stem fair scion to ingraft

* Lady Maria Micklethwaite, only daughter of the Countess of Waldegrave.

Its blood and virtues on some honour'd house,
Worthy such high affiance. At the shrine
Of sweetness, goodness, truth, love bow'd, nor long
Was Hymen absent; but the cypress bud*
Mix'd in his roseate wreaths. One year revolves:
The village-bells now toll the funeral-knell;
The groves of Beeston, that with pride receiv'd
Their angel-habitant so late, now hang
Their solemn umbrage o'er the cavalcade
Of death, slow pacing where Maria erst
Shone like a vernal morn. Ah! what remains
Of hopes so brilliant, of deserts so high,
To sooth the widow'd bridegroom, or console
A matron vers'd in wo? Yon infant-boy—
Whose birth records his mother's death, the heir
Of these domains, beneath whose shade he sports—
Inquires why he is pitied, and what means
Maternal love, a tie to him unknown.

* "And in his garland, as he stood,
You might discern a cypress bud."
Milton's Elegy on the Marchioness of Winchester.

So when the fall'n Emathian race through Rome
Walk'd in captivity, a dolorous band,
Young Perseus, laughing in his nurse's arms,
Seem'd to enjoy the triumph. Ruthless hearts,
Who mock'd a king in chains, yearn'd to behold
The sportive babe, unconscious of his wrongs,
Enjoy the pageantry which told his doom,
A slave, an orphan, not Achaia's lord.

Swift flew the fatal shaft, whose dire arrest
Clos'd young Maria's brief and blameless joys.
But oft man's fell destroyer o'er his prey
Reluctant seems to stand, as if he felt
For his submitting victim, or allow'd
A mother's feeble anguish to restrain
His mace descending on a prostrate slave.
Long hours of sad suspense has she endur'd
Who in her patient daughter sees the course
Of some severe distemper undefin'd,
That o'er life's morning waves its ebon wing,

And strews the couch of innocence with thorns
Of torture and despair. Pale as a form
Of marble, as a martyr meek, devout
As the rapt seraph, to whose converse high
Her holy hopes aspire, year after year
The sufferer lies, sees but the shaded sun
Through her veil'd window glimmer, to denote
The day from night. Of life she nothing knows,
Save that to live is pain ; of the gay world,
Man's busy theatre, no gorgeous scene,
Except what some fair sister softly paints
At hours of partial ease, in hopes to wake
A sickly smile. Of nature's beauteous face
She steals a glimpse in one short annual round,
To visit every neighbouring shrub, whose form
Memory depictur'd to her sleepless eyes.
She marks how they have flourish'd, while to her
The genial seasons and the rapid hours
Brought sure returns of pain, condemn'd to wear
All forms but that which mercifully ends

The toil of sufferance. Yet content to live,
Tho' looking oft at death, resign'd and calm,
She languishes in patient cheerfulness,
Without one murmur; for beside her lies
A sovereign cordial, to whose healing balm
She oft applies intent, and, mid her throes,
Seeks in the book of God assurance firm
Of regions, at whose joyful bourn disease
And lassitude their ransom'd victims yield.

With love untir'd, with hopes defeated oft,
Yet still renew'd, the tender mother bends
O'er the dear girl, oft willing to resign
Her innocent to God; as oft, when ease
Relaxes the strain'd muscles, vainly deems
Misery hath spent her shafts, repose will heal
What fierce distemper tore; th' untasted joys
Of health will light upon the wondering maid,
Most grateful for that treasure libertines
Throw from their spendthrift hands; that gem, unpriz'd,

Which sparkles in the ruddy beggar's eye,
Who, thankless for the blessing, little wrecks
What for Potosi's mine were cheaply sold.

Nor, tho' from fragile womanhood more oft
The passive virtues claim their tribute hard,
Of meek endurance, is athletic man
Exempt from sickness. Oft his sinewy frame
In prime of vigour feels the burning shaft
Of pestilence; delirious falls, and dies
Ere med'cine, like Plantagenet's chaste bride,
With healing lip can cool the poison'd wound.
So fell a youth of kindred blood, who liv'd
A mother's dearest hope, and dying wrung
Her heart with sharpest pangs. Like her of Nain,
She was a widow, friendless, feeble, old;
Like her, the bier where all her treasure lay
She follow'd; neighbours, kinsfolk also wept
To see her sorrows; but no hand divine
With touch miraculous the funeral stay'd,

Restor'd the festering sleeper, gave him power
To burst his cearments, to exchange the grave's
Deep solitude for his fond mother's arms,
And with renew'd existence bless that life
His death would close. Yet, William, thou shalt rise
When death's last dart is hurl'd! A voice divine
Spake to thy mother too, in whispers sweet,
"Weep not, be comforted. All who believe
In me shall, at my summons, quit their graves;
I am the resurrection and the life."

O promise dear to man, whether he sinks
Subdued by age, like ripen'd corn, or falls
By sudden stroke, or gradually o'erthrown
By hectic, deadly as the fatal juice
Of pois'nous mineral or herb, the pest
Of Britain, thus in early prime depriv'd
Of many a gallant son and daughter fair.
So fell two brothers, from a mother sprung
Whose earthly course soon clos'd, consign'd to heav'n

The infant-pledges of connubial love,
With many a blessing, and with many a pray'r.
One, like the plant from which it sprung, refin'd,
Gentle, and elegant, preferr'd the path
Of peaceful life, nor felt ambition's fires,
Save when the Muses to his raptur'd view
Unveil'd the glorious world of phantasy,
Peopled with radiant forms; or nature deck'd
In vernal or autumnal mantle, ask'd
His imitative pencil to describe
Her glowing beauties and majestic port.
He sigh'd not for the plumage of renown,
The golden chains of avarice, or the mask
Of meretricious joy. Holy and high
His aims aspir'd; the converse of the wise,
The friendship of the virtuous. In their haunts
Swift flew his social hours; there gently blaz'd
The modest radiance of ingenious taste,
Wit's playful coruscations, and the rays
Of sentiment and feeling, prone to gild

Beauties the world discerns not. Omens these
Of honour, and integrity, and sense,
And manly sweetness, when maturing time
Ripens these fruits of heaven. Ah! false presage!
Peruse yon path-worn stone; it tells a tale
Simple and sad: the mother's grave unclos'd
Its portal to receive her elder born
In manhood's early prime, and wak'd anew
In the fond father and the husband's breast
The pangs of separation. Hast thou seen
The fruit exotic, parch'd by noxious blasts,
Keen frosts, or fervid suns, shed its sweet flowers,
And aromatic leaves, decline and die,
Mocking the florist's care? So droop'd, so died
Ingenuous Thyrsis; his fine form, dispos'd
By slender elegance, wither'd and shrunk
Like the dried sapling. In his glist'ning eyes,
Shaded with long dark fringes, shone a beam,
Caught from the glories of that purer world
To which he hasten'd. His expressive face,

Where all the generous passions smil'd or frown'd,
Flush'd with an hectic glow, or icy pale,
Spoke surer than the death-watch, "Flesh is grass,
And human beauty but a short-liv'd flower."

Fair flower! thy native fields which nurs'd thy bloom
Receiv'd thy ashes; there the fair renown
Of thy untainted manners still remains
Amid thy playmates, family, and friends.
Thy gentle spirit left a world untried,
Pure from defilement, and to guile unknown.

But not his native province, nor the meads
Of peaceful Albion, rich in bliss, detain
The younger brother. He, with vast delight,
Reads of the nations where Pactolus flows
O'er beds of golden sands, of mountain-streams
That tear the diamond from its bed, of shores
Spangled with pearls, the gales of Araby
Breathing odorous balms, of citron groves,

Pomegranate mounds, and where th' anana shoots
In deep ravines, loading the perfum'd air
With satiating sweet. He hears of realms
O'er which the genial sun rides through a sky
Of azure unobscur'd; where by the spring,
For ever dress'd, nature regales each sense
With full delight; where life is ecstasy,
Devoid of care: nor can the scowling mien
Of giant-danger, lurking in the storm,
The hungry lion, the insidious snake,
The bloody cannibal, or tyrant foe,
Pall the impetuous wish which bids him prove
These fair Hesperian tales. Nor other plans
Delight him now; for on his youthful cheek
Flames expectation, while propitious gales
Waft the deep-freighted ship in which he goes
To vast Cathay, a world distinct and strange;
Nor less by produce, manners, laws, and forms,
Than seas immense, divided from our own.

Now, after twice ten moons have wan'd, behold
With gay carousals and loud shouts, the crew
Salute their native country. On the shore
Iulus leaps, and to his shipmates waves
His lifted bonnet; then, with jocund step,
Explores his home, a pastoral hamlet, girt
With hills of richest verdure, there to tell
Of dangers, wonders, and achievements strange.
Amid the circle of his early friends
He sits sole orator; the less'ning lamp
Wastes unperceiv'd, and hours unnotic'd glide.
Yet neither rich Brazil, the cape of storms
First by De Gama pass'd, nor India's seas,
Scarce curl'd by spicy gales, nor arid winds,
That scath Sumatra's burning valleys, long
Detain his narrative. He hastes to tell
Of the fierce typhon, whirling in its rage
Th' unshrouded ship, while through the naked poles
Destruction howling snaps her stately mast,

And crushes her strong sides. The guiding helm
No more directs her course; two nights and days
She drives before the storm; th' exhausted crew,
High perch'd on barren Hainau's craggy rocks,
Behold death menacing, and almost wish
To rest their weary limbs in the repose
Of his still empire; for incessant toil
Withers ev'n British nerves, and the big tear
Fell o'er thy check, Iulus, as thy tongue
Describ'd those woes. Far different was thy look,
Far different felt thy audience, when the tale
Of Gallia's boastful pirate, sly Linois,
Mighty in narrative, became thy theme;
When huge Marengo and her consort-hulks,
Laden with plunder, near Macao's isle,
Patient in rapine, lurk'd. Full many a sun
Saw the raw shipmates exercis'd in arms,
And many a moon beheld the chieftain wrapp'd
In waking dreams of fortune and renown
Purloin'd from Britain, when her peaceful ships,

Bearing the barter'd treasures of Cathay
In their deep holds, steer homewards, unprepar'd
For other conflict, save of seas and storms.

Behold, at length, the floating caravan
Girds like a line th' horizon's edge; and now,
Approaching nearer, shows a wood of masts,
Dark'ning the ocean. Forth the vultures spring
To pounce upon their prey, but soon recoil;
No mark of blandishment, surprise, or fear,
Th' advancing fleet betrays. Arrang'd for fight,
England's proud ensign at each mizen flies;
The shrouds are mann'd with marksmen, and bold hearts
Give to the feebler implements of war
Force uncontroul'd. "They fled!" Iulus cried;
"The pride of France, her naval hero, he
Who fill'd her vaunting chronicles with lies,
Fled from the trader, cumber'd with his stores,
And new to combat. How we mock'd the knaves,
Cheer'd them in scorn, defied them to return,
And menac'd them with plunder, chains, and death!'

Thus, with pleased retrospect, the gallant boy
Recounts his darings, and anticipates
New enterprise. He pants for trials hard,
To win bright fortune mid the conflict dire
Of warring elements, nor heeds the threat
Of mining sickness lurking in his veins;
Cold counsels he disclaims, nor droops his heart,
Till, sailing 'neath the equinox, the rays
Of burning Phœbus drink his wasted strength.
Loth he resigns his custom'd watch, and pants
On his lone hammock for refreshing gales
To renovate his frame. Those gales shall rise,
Temper'd with India's balms; her fruits shall cool
Thy fever'd lip, dear wanderer, pow'rless all
To stay the ravage of disease. Behold
The thrifty crew, intent on interest, land
The sick incumbrance on the shelvy isle
Of far Penang; there lies he, lost to all
He knew or lov'd. No tender parent wipes
The death-dew from his brow; no youthful friend

Cheats with sweet converse the sad hours, that roll
Unvaried; save, when at the custom'd bell
The dark Malay glides through the mournful wards,
And, cold himself to human feeling, deals
To every son of misery his dole,
And hears his plaints in silent apathy.
Ah, then, Iulus! on thy wakeful eyes
How did the visions of thy former days
In sad succession steal; a father's love,
A father's precepts, and a father's woes,
Thrill'd thy brave heart with pangs not less intense
Than thy bright dreams of honourable wealth,
And eminence, and fame, closing so soon
Their fabling promise in a tale untold,
A life oblivious, and a death unmourn'd!
Oft turn'd thine eyes to the bare beach to catch
The passing sails of Albion; oft thy thoughts
Cours'd with the much-lov'd voyagers through isles
Pregnant with life-restoring drugs, high capes
Fann'd by soft tepid gales, or colonies

Of generous, social Britons. Still despair
Swept the fair phantoms thence, and howling cried,
" Thou never shalt those happy seats behold,
The voice of love shall sound to thee no more."

Yet on his dying hour one joyful gleam
Shot radiant; to the port a vessel steers,
The ship whose well-compacted sides sustain'd
The typhon's rage, the crew which brav'd Linois,
His former comrades, fellow-sufferers, friends.
They rush into his arms,—the warm embrace
Renews his vital functions. " I shall live,"
He cries, " to thank you. O convey me hence,
Bear me to my own hammock, where I swung
In China's seas, nor heard the falling mast,
Lock'd in sweet sleep; there I shall sleep again,
Unvex'd by feverish dreams." There didst thou sleep,
Ingenuous boy, and many a veteran wept
O'er thy still slumbers, destin'd to endure,
Till time resigns his empire to his sire.

He first thy chief, Lee Boo's own Wilson, fam'd
For sense and manly feeling, he assign'd
Christian and naval honours to thy corse;
It lies in consecrated ground, but far
From kindred and from country. O'er thy grave
Waves the tall cassia, and the radiant bird
Of paradise there spreads its shaded plumes,
Spangled with emerald, amethyst, and gold.

Thus, with resistless tyranny, disease
Through different stations, characters, and climes,
Pursues his victims, and preventive care
Displays her shield in vain. Death ambushes
Amid the rosy garlands that entwine
The joyous bowl; and where with cautious fear
The sober student flies the gay carouse,
And shuns the form of danger, he intrudes;
Shreds in the prophet's pottage deadly herbs*,
And mocks th' anxiety of her who aims

* 2 Kings, 4th chapter, 40th verse.

To fence her children from the rav'ning grave,
By building care on care; beneath their feet
It yawns, and earth demands the breathing dust,
Lent as a fragile tenement to man.

Nor do the woes which rive a mother's heart
With measur'd step still pace the path of death,
Like sable mourners at a funeral—
A form more horrible they oft assume,
And ask his shaft in mercy. Seest thou her,
Whose brightest mood is but a wintry moon,
Seen in a night of mist? She dares not weep,
Nor call on sympathy, like those who yield
Their dearest offspring to their Maker's will,
By summons premature. 'Tis her first hope,
That prying curiosity (to her
Ev'n friendship takes that form) knows not the grief
Which, like th' Egyptian asp, in her heart's core
Has fix'd its fangs immutable. Her bane
Is a lost girl, a fair one, and betray'd

By beauty, weak credulity, and love;
One who ne'er listen'd, tho' her warning voice
Pointed seduction as a wily snake
Gliding along the thicket, where, like Eve,
She lov'd alone to wander*, confident
Of strength, like her; a tempter also came,
Told a smooth tale, and triumph'd. What remains
To the deluded victim of his arts?
Tears and reproaches. Baby arms! he oft
Hath mock'd their puny wounds. Is he not rich,
Is he not noble? Will the world assail
His fame, or high-born beauty lothe his arms,
Because a village-maid found his embrace
Contamination, ruin, and despair?
No: he is censur'd with a gentle smile,
Call'd gay, but elegant, and good at heart,
And soon to be reclaim'd. The different doom
Of her is misery; a relentless sire
Denies her wrongs the shelter of a roof,

* Paradise Lost, Book 9th.

Where yet dishonour never found abode.
In vain the mother weeps, intreats, persuades,
Harsh is the father, and the haughty girl
Turns desp'rate from despair. To folly soon
Guilt, bold, determin'd guilt succeeds; those charms,
So oft the mother's wish, a prelude oft
To bridal splendour and connubial wealth,
Are barter'd now to purchase scant support
For loth'd existence. In the haunts of shame
Her beauty fades; sportive Euphrosyne
Adopts Megara's sullen brow, ill gloss'd
With smiles like those the Tyrian minion us'd,
Astarba*, when she drugg'd Pygmalion's bowl,
And pledg'd the draught of death. With such she leads
The victims she entrammels to partake
Her destitution, misery extreme,
Remorse, tho' deep, yet stubborn, which no touch
Of true repentance turns to comfort. Death
Is not to her a harbour from life's storm,

* Telemachus, Book 8th.

A refuge for the shipwreck'd; 'tis the rack
On which obdurate wickedness must bide
Eternal wrath. So the sad mother knows,
And trembles to inquire if she has clos'd
Her earthly shames. So knows she when she kneels
In prayer to heav'n, and for a sinner pleads,
Who never prays; for her she supplicates
The axe may be suspended, tho' the tree
Bears nought but poison. Did she feel for this
A mother's throes, and cares, and hopes, and joys?
O traitor man! A gaudy equipage
Glides by in pomp; the bridal-favours shine:
Scarce can she keep from curses. Yet, O God!
Thou art most just, and to thy sanctuary
She creeps with tottering step, and for a while
In thy vast mercy loses sight of wo.

Who kneels beside her, in the faded garb
Of worn gentility, with cheek as pale,
And eyes more streaming? 'Tis a mother, brought

To bitter need by one she trusted most,
And dearest lov'd; a child, an only son,
Once lord of mansions, woods, and pastures. She
Own'd but a widow's portion, which suffic'd
The modest wants of age and charity;
A cultivated garden, a new book,
And social friend, were all, save the spare mite
To warm the frozen heart of penury,
Mourning in naked walls, which scarce shut out
The elements tempestuous, tho' they barr'd
Access of comfort, sustenance, and hope,
Till kind Euphrasia at the portal stood,
Heav'n's ministring angel, and with sweetness, such
As angels use to man, dealt provident
Economy's wise aids. Dry is the fount
From which they flow'd, though, ere this rill was stopp'd,
The claims of self were check'd. The garden first
Lost its rare plants, and literature mourn'd
One patron gone. No more the social friend
Found a warm welcome, and Euphrasia's garb

Chang'd from fresh neatness, elegantly plain,
To ill-assorted, threadbare relics, types
Of fallen dignity. Compell'd at length
By stern necessity to feed the calls
Of waste, that pelican who never spares
To gore a parent, blameable in nought
But kind indulgence, sad Euphrasia quits
The decent residence where first she wept
A husband's death, the village by her care
Improv'd, inform'd, and fed. Her servants old
And inexpert, yet faithful, much she mourns
That she must leave them friendless, to contend
With age and want. Alas! if all were told,
Like suffering Guatimozin *, she could ask
If she repos'd on roses; for her doom
Is yon small attic, clean, but cold and bare,
Where her own hands supply the offices
Her youth requir'd from many. Her delight

* The last sovereign of Mexico. See Robertson's America, Book 5th.

The daily ritual, when the social chimes
Of bells to church divert the reveries
Of lonely meditation, which will muse
On past and priz'd enjoyments, and thy sting,
Filial ingratitude; tho' the firm hands
Of patience, meekly folded on her breast,
Repress'd the murmurs of her throbbing heart,
And bade her tongue be silent, nor complain
Of poverty, neglect, or hate from him
She cherish'd with her blood, bore in her arms,
Sustain'd in childhood, watch'd in youth, and now,
Spite of her wrongs and his misconduct, loves.

Turn we from her to where, with feeble strength,
Yet much-enduring will, busy when age
Finds rest its dearest holyday—for noise
Is anguish, silence bliss—a matron tries
To rule a wayward group of vigorous imps,
Who ask a firm preceptor to restrain
Their overweening ardour. Generous blood
Requires more strict coercion than befits

A wo-worn grandame, who with tears oft bathes
Her sprightly pupils, orphans of a sire
Who with misfortune struggled, till he fell
In Indostan, planting his country's flag
On Agra's distant walls. Yet was not war
His early choice. He tried, but tried in vain,
The peaceful walks of commerce and of arts.
By faithless friends deceiv'd, by patrons cold
Deluded and abandon'd, what remain'd
But in some distant region to explore
A milder doom than poverty and scorn?
His wife, late wedded and much lov'd, refus'd
The shelter of his mother's narrow cot,
And shar'd his fortunes. O'er a world of waves
Sail'd the forlorn adventurers; save her
Who own'd that narrow cot, they had no friend
To mourn their loss, or aid their miseries.

But ready was her aid, and deep her grief,
And vast the vacuum which their absence made
At her neat hearth, once social, lonely now,

And sad, save when the homebound fleet arriv'd,
Charg'd with the wealth of India, and to her
With treasures richer than Golconda's mines,
Purer than Mecca's balsam, letters fraught
With gratitude's warm tribute, sacred hoards
Of anxious love, and stores of confidence,
Disclosing strong integrity of aim,
And glorious magnanimity, which stay
The soul against the buffets of mischance,
Firm as the twisted cords which to her shores
Bind Britain's trident. These, Amelia, spread
In winter evenings on thy board, supplied
Thy best regale; and when thou sat'st, fatigu'd
With noontide wanderings, on a mossy bank,
Screen'd from the fervid day-star, from the eye
Of observation screen'd, in these thou saw'st
A charm than summer lovelier; for they told
Of perils past, of labours well perform'd,
Endanger'd health restor'd, adversity
By prudence baffled, and a vista hewn

By hope through fate's dark wilderness. "We soon,"
He writes, "shall sail for England. Wisdom plans
A vast achievement, and my share of spoil
Will dower frugality with ample means.
Enlarge thy cot, my mother, for thy son
Will sit beside thee, and afford thine age
The help his youth experienc'd from thy love.
He brings a numerous family to join
His pious offices; prepare thy heart
For a young grandchild, sporting in thine arms,
Winding its fingers in thy silver locks,
And with its ardent kiss closing thine eyes,
Dimm'd with the tear of joy." The narrow cot
Is soon enlarg'd, and rank'd in order due;
The desks, and forms, and hammocks are prepar'd
For the young guests. They land, a sable train.
Where is your mother? "Dead." Your father where?
"He died at Agra; conquest crown'd his sword,
But the lance pierc'd him as he bravely tore
The crescent from her walls. We bring transcrib'd

The general orders which decreed his corpse
A soldier's trophied grave. Our mother liv'd
To hear his fate, then sicken'd, and expir'd,
And left us friendless. She was weak of soul,
And should have staid to save the wealth our sire
Bought with his blood from Indian treachery.
We liv'd among the natives, orphan-babes
Of those they hate as conquerors, but found
A generous Englishman, a friend, whose care
Preserv'd our little pittance. We embark'd
For England and for you. O weep not thus!
We will be ever dutiful, and strive
To make you think of dear papa no more."

Yet on that father, on that man of woes,
Whose bones at Agra whiten, still her thoughts
Delight to dwell. She sees him in his boys;
Such were his sports, his early gallantry,
His noble firmness. So he look'd and smil'd;
But, O! he lov'd her dearer, and escap'd

The errors seen in them. Yet for their sake
She yields to live, and cherishes with care
Life's glimmering candle, in its socket sunk,
And verging on extinction. If she dies,
Who with such thrifty justice will expend
Their scanty stipend, with such tender care
Watch their exotic humours, or refine
Their souls to virtues worthy of their birth?
For this she asks, what piety would else
Crave to resign, a life of care and toil,
Ill suited to decrepitude's worn frame.

Yet, Muse, forget not in thy list of griefs
Amanda's sorrows. She, the blameless wife
Of rich Mercator, in her family
Blessing and bless'd. With every promise fair
They flourish'd; but most lovely, most belov'd,
Louisa shone in beauty's early morn,
Gay, innocent, affectionate, the joy,
The pride of all. Soon was that morn o'ercast;

O'er her fair cheek a sickly languor stole,
And the soft sighs which issu'd unobserv'd,
Contrasted by strain'd gayety, betray'd
By its unapt disguise. Alone she rov'd,
Preferr'd the moonlight to the noon-day walk;
Or, bending o'er her lute, unconscious humm'd
Some tender tale of love. With mirthful hearts,
Unstricken yet, her sportive sisters gib'd
Her alter'd manners, and in whispers vow'd
To tell the cause Amanda's anxious eye
Discern'd too plainly, that the canker love
Prey'd on her damask rose. Patient she staid,
Nor yet with zeal indecorous profan'd
The sacred haunts where maiden modesty
Conceal'd the preference to its blushing self,
Perchance but half reveal'd. And now her eye
Measures their youthful visitants, him first,
Henry of Avondel, their frequent guest,
Rich, young, and gay, at whose unyielding heart
Tir'd Cupid empts his quivers; unsubdu'd,

Tho' the bold huntress, fair Clorinda, e'er
Pursu'd him buskin'd in the arduous chase,
And talk'd of Trip's and Ranter's feats; uncaught,
Tho' soft Erminia carv'd on the smooth beach
His name with true-love knots and flourishes;
And when she met his eyes, with side-long glance
Told how she lov'd him. Free the rover goes,
Dances with Polymele, with Mira sings,
Whispers kind nothings to each cheated maid,
And mocks the bait by many a skilful dame
Suspended o'er his manors. "Is it he,"
Amanda cries, "for whom Louisa pines,
At first ambition's dupe, then plung'd by love
In dungeons of despondence, where he hides
The recreant nymphs who volunteer their hearts?
Her sisters say she loves him, and predict
Merit like hers can never love in vain.
Poor girls! unskill'd to read the heart of man;
They little think how pride delights in power,

And vanity displays th' Hesperian fruit
To tempt and cheat doting credulity."

Now the sage mother marks Louisa's face
When Henry enters. "Does it flush with shame?
Do the unmeaning compliments which form
The current coin of life, gain from his tongue
A sterling value? Does she shun his hand,
As if an adder bedded in his palm?
Yet does her timid eye, when unobserv'd,
In silent adoration on his face
Throw its rapt gaze? If so, too true she loves,
And 'twere but self-delusion did she scoff
With jests misplac'd his manners and his mien;
That were affection's feint, who, undisguis'd
But rarely speaks in bashful womanhood,
Till love to Hymen his fair captive yields."

'Tis doubtful still, no kindling blush, no gaze
Of stol'n idolatry, no tremors chill

Betray her secret woes. Now rumour tells
Of Henry's marriage, an alliance high;
Birth, beauty, fortune, all unite to crown
His envied bride. Her taste shall re-adorn
That ancient hall where pale Louisa's eyes
Have long been thought to fix. Her ample dower
(To all but waste superfluous) shall repair
The breaches wanton prodigality
Made in fair Avondel. Report shall tell
His happiness, and pity slightly name
The maid who lov'd him. Yet Louisa's cheeks
Reveal no traces of more frequent tears,
Nor wax they paler. She repeats with praise
The bridegroom's fondness, and the nuptia pomp;
Pays her due gratulations, then returns
To solitude, and woos the nightingale.

"Still droops my darling girl," Amanda cries,
"But not for wedded Henry. Does despair
Consume her blasted prime? and yet a youth,

Such as gray spinsters picture when they tell
The triumphs of their early beauty, bows,
And meets a cold denial." Much incens'd,
Mercator asks, " Can maiden pride demand
Offer more splendid, or fastidious taste
Require a nobler mind or finer form ?"
Trembling at stern rebuke, the sobbing fair
Sinks in her mother's faithful arms. Her tears
Mix with the silent mourner's, while she craves
That confidence too long withheld, too long,
By scrupulous, high-minded delicacy,
Spar'd from solicitude. Louisa's eyes
Confess there is a secret, and implore
Forgiveness for a grievous fault, chastis'd
By sufferings exquisite. " Name not to me,"
She cries, " the worth of Alcon, nor suppose
That the young heir of Avondel hath doom'd
My life to singleness. Along thy plains,
Fertile Bengal, my husband roams ; for him,
Wedded in thoughtless childhood, and estrang'd

By habit, time, and distance, flow these tears.
Ceaseless they bathe his pictur'd form, when grief
Seals every eye but mine, and the pale lamp
Directs me to the casket where I hide
The tokens of his early love; for once,
O mother! sure he lov'd me; and perchance
Not to neglect, but faithless elements,
I owe his silence now." "His name, my child?"
Exclaims the faltering mother, as she strains
With reconciling fondness to her heart
The shivering, fainting culprit. "'Tis a name
That will offend. My sire's inveterate foe,
Unworthy Raymond, who betray'd his trust,
And wrong'd his fame, gave birth to him I love,
To him I wedded. While a witless girl,
We at a kinsman's met. Romantic hearts,
Inflam'd by Romeo's wrongs, and Juliet's woes,
Taught us to love, and realize the tale,
He Montague, I doting Capulet.
Marriage would heal the breaches of our house,

And from the brier of hidden love would grow
The rose of concord. So a youthful friend,
With seeming wisdom pleaded; but, alas!
O'er thy rebellious daughter's marriage-bed
The cypress and the willow wav'd. Regret
Is mine, and mine remorse, till death dissolves
The contract folly form'd. Yet, if thou canst
Protect me from my father's wrath, conceal
My wrongs, my woes. How would his honour brook
To hear his tempted daughter has been urg'd
To break recorded vows; urg'd, too, by him
To whom she pledg'd them! O! I tell thee all,
Ev'n the last sorrow of this broken heart.
Raymond would give me liberty, resign
His title to some worthier suppliant,
Blest with paternal sanction. Love, he says,
And honour claim this sacrifice of self,
From hopeless, fix'd despair. Can honour stoop
To license foul adultery, or love
Quit what it best prefers? Couldst thou resign

Thy child, my mother? In the guiltiness
Of my confess'd transgressions I dare ask,
If thou couldst cast me as an alien off,
To be beheld no more? O press me still
To thy warm heart in silence, nor reply:
The sharp reproaches of thy pitying tears
Shoot through my mortal wounds. Would heaven I ne'er
Had known a love, or trusted faith but thine!"

"O child for ever dear! yet be th' offence
Of secrecy by confidence aton'd,
And trust thy father's wisdom, love, and care.
I will divulge thy story; meet the burst
Of angry rage, and, when its transport ends,
(As quickly it will end in sorrow) lead
Thee to receive his blessing. It will drop
Like balm upon thy anguish, and his will
Shall guide thy future course." Louisa yields;
In palpitating agony she waits
The kind ambassadress, who soon returns,

And brings the news of pardon. Half her woes
End at that sound; but injur'd love prepares
Fresh sorrow; nor will Hymen crown with peace
The inauspicious contract folly form'd,
And falsehood violates. Where wild excess
Revels in tropic regions, and bestows
Nature's best products on a sensual lord
Unworthy of her gifts, young Raymond's name
Was heard with detestation. Merciless,
Ev'n in the bow'r of wantonness, to those
Who fed his brutal appetites; unjust,
Where he had strength to wrong, yet prone to bend,
Th' expectant sycophant of wealth and power.
Such was Louisa's husband! His misdeeds
Came posting on a thousand couriers. Say,
To such a guardian should fond parents trust
Their pure, dejected daughter? Tho' allur'd
By promis'd dow'r, and cheated in his hope
Of higher nuptials, Raymond woos her now
With tempting tales of eastern pomp, and vows

Of love renew'd, and many a smooth excuse
For past unkindness. No: with lingering love
They clasp her close, and still delay the hour
Of separation, till her alter'd eye
In vacant stupor fix'd, or rolling wild,
Tells that the cup of misery is drain'd
Ev'n to its dregs; and the fair maniac, freed
From sense of true misfortune, wanders now
Amid the visions of distemper'd thought.
Oft o'er the sea she sails, and welcomes oft
India's well-painted shores. In fancied state
She decks her hair with berries, as with gems,
Ascends her palanquin, and round her calls
Her tawny slaves, and tells the silver moon
To light her o'er the Ganges to her love.
Anon with rage she glows, tears from her head
The ornaments fantastic, furious beats
Her breast, and bids the tiger and the wolf
Say if their name is Raymond. Sinking soon
In sad exhaustion, with a feeble wail

She mourns her miseries, till sympathy
Is thrill'd with anguish. But attendant still
On all her woes, soothing each wild caprice,
Checking with trembling grasp her frenzied hands,
And pleading mild, when, save thyself, no friend
Durst bide her fury, thou, Amanda, still
For many a year didst o'er the sufferer watch,
And gain, what none but thou couldst gain, the pow'r
To rule her wanderings. As in infant life,
Thine eye could check her lapses, and thy pray'rs
Disarm her fury, till her wayward sense
In gentle error rested; mild, compos'd,
And inoffensive, but persuaded firm
That Raymond still was faithful, and would come
When the calm seas permitted. All day long
She watch'd the winds, but still they never blew
Aright; and still at eve the fleecy clouds
Sail'd o'er the wandering moon too swift. Yet hope
Would image the tranquillity denied
To her sick thought, and bid the future rise

Sacred to peace and joy. With kindred ray
Hope gilds the labours of maternal love;
Grateful for lessen'd ills, Amanda trusts,
Ere her eyes close in death, to see her child,
By misery made most dear, repay her care
With conscious gratitude, restor'd to peace,
To reason's heavenly ray again restor'd.

Nor were her pray'rs ungranted, tho' her eyes
Saw not the blessed change. The snows of age,
Falling on poor Louisa's wrinkled brow,
Compos'd her burning brain. Serene and calm,
Her early cheerfulness renew'd, nor all
Her early beauty faded, in life's eve
She shone a star of bounty to distress,
A guide to thoughtless youth, remembering well
That she had greatly err'd, and deeply mourn'd.

Nor turns the Muse from gazing on the train
Of real wo, passing in sombre pomp,

Till she has call'd on pity to bestow
A tear to sooth yon matron. Dignified,
And pale, and graceful is her faded form—
She stops where British gratitude erects
The trophies of our warriors; stops, and weeps,
Musing on him who fell, ere victory
Quench'd the vast thirst of valour. Yet at times
Her heart escapes the sternness of his fate,
And glows with high entrancement, pondering o'er
Maida's triumphant day, Rosetta's field,
Acre, where England humbled blasphemy,
And Aboukir, where Abercromby died
Beneath the flag of glory. From that scene
Quick glance her thoughts to him she ever mourns;
A son*—she has no other; and a line
Of patriots, chiefs, and statesmen fails, extinct
In him who, on the rock of chivalry,

* George, only son of Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, Bart. was killed on the landing of the British troops in Egypt, in the 19th year of his age, and buried at Malta.

Sleeps with Valetta's heroes; sleeps, ere fate
Allow'd his youthful arm to realize
The glowing visions portray'd on his mind,
When honour bound the sabre on his thigh,
And sent him to the tented field, to prove
His untried puissance. Eagerly he rush'd
To grave his high-born name beside his sire's,
And met the missile death, ere yet his arm
Had flesh'd his sword. Forth well'd the generous blood,
Drawn from the fount of ancient kings; and hope,
Which on his amber ringlets tow'ring sat,
Sunk to the dust with them in blood imbu'd.

Yet turn, illustrious mourner, in whose eyes
Sorrow hath quench'd the lamp of joy and love,
No more to be re-lumin'd; turn and own
Thy misery not extreme. There is a grief
To which thy pangs are light, an agony
Intense, which, shivering 'twixt despair and hope,
Knows not on which to gaze. Ask those whose sons

Launch'd in the Grosvenor's fated keel, and 'scap'd
The elements, to meet a fate more dire,
In wild Caffraria's deserts wandering,
Distant from human aid, and barely fed
With nature's vilest produce. One by one
They languish'd and expir'd; the weakest first,
Soon join'd in death by him whose stronger limbs
Turn'd from his dying comrade to explore
Another portion of th' untrodden waste [guide,
That stretch'd around them: there, with chance their
They stray'd in many a curve. Nor sex, nor age
Then wak'd humanity; each wretch, intent
On self-support, sigh'd for the pittance giv'n
To save a feebler sufferer, in whose eyes
Wild famine glar'd. One lovely boy alone
For succour pleaded, and was heard. He liv'd
The darling of the hardier few, who long
Endur'd the struggle. In their friendly arms
Alternate borne, he shar'd their scanty spoils,
And fed the watch-light as they roam'd for food,

Soothing their woes with infant-blandishment,
And smiles cherubic, till weak nature sunk,
And death, in shivering listlessness disguis'd,
Embrac'd the guiltless mourner. Then despair
A final conquest gain'd; and as they delv'd
The drifting sand to hide his faded charms,
With stony eyes they envied his repose,
Nor sicken'd more for European vales.
Yet to vast Afric's southern wilds, the haunt
Of beasts carnivorous, or barbarous tribes
Than brutes more bestial, hope still lingering chain'd
The fond maternal soul, and imag'd there
Her wandering child a savage or a slave,
Panting for social life, tho' long estrang'd
From all its joys, in anguish long immur'd,
Yet not grown callous in the grasp of wo.

So fell suspense, of miseries worst, thy fangs
Tortur'd full many a mother, when the banks
Of Cavary, in India's chersonese,

Disclos'd a scene of bloody fraud, while he,
The wily tiger of Mysore, invok'd
Revenge from black Gehenna to dispute
With British firmness; saw the fiend subdu'd
By patient strength, then with malignant pride
Drew dark oblivion's curtain to conceal
The names of those who suffer'd, and their wrongs.
Rose not those injur'd spirits, when thy walls
Seringapatam! crumbled, and expos'd
The tyrant's race to Britain's missile fires?
Did they not gibber, when the cruel son
Of the fell sire, their murderer, pour'd his blood
Where theirs had gush'd; or when their country's flag
Wav'd o'er the musnud where he sat and view'd
Their tortures, and in them (short-sighted fiend!)
Deem'd England's name and empire all destroy'd?

Lingers the Muse to probe the recent wounds
Scarce skinn'd by time, of her, whose gallant boy
At Ceylon perish'd? Ceylon, star of isles,

That rises radiant in the eastern sea.
In thee, as in a chrystal cabinet,
Nature inshrines her choicest treasures, gold,
And gems, and spices, drugs medicinal,
And balms odorous. Yet thy sunny vales
Nourish a cruel race. Here Britain's sons,
Captives of war, a foe like Hyder found,
And shar'd the fate of Baillie's slaughter'd band.
Mysterious fate! Truth on the storied page
A feeble outline draws, and yields the pen
To vivid fancy, fashioner of ills
Most horrible. O'er the sad mother's couch
She lies, a brooding incubus, and crowds
The dolorous chamber with her earth-born gnomes,
Tortures, and shrieks, and groans, and mortal throes,
By man endur'd from fellow-man, who mocks
That code of heavenly mercy, which hath loos'd *
The captive's bands, and from thy chariot, war,

* See the Bishop of London's tract on the benefits which the world in general has derived from Christianity.

Pluck'd the destroying scythe which murder'd those
Who crouch'd beneath thy jav'lin's awful blow.

O Britain, native isle, whose triumphs warm
My breast with ardour, for whose wrongs I mourn,
And with a woman's weakness shuddering hear
Thy dangers! Queen of ocean! with regret
I must accuse thee, tho' thy victor-flag
Flames like a steady cynosure, to shew
A darkling world the port where liberty,
Honour, and truth, their votive altars guard.
Bears not that banner, in its ample field,
The Christian symbol? Christian are thy hosts,
And on the word of God thy Christian crown
Recumbent lies. Why then like Carmel's churl*,
Withhold thy living waters, and thy bread
Of life from hungry strangers, subject now
To all thy laws, except thy laws divine?

* Nabal. See 1st Samuel, 25th chapter, 11th verse.

Art thou the nation maritime, beheld
Long since by Amos' son * in vision clear,
Beyond the Ethiopic floods, with wings
Protecting other lands, and sending forth
Her fragile vessels over distant seas?
And shall the awful mandate to collect
Israel oppress'd and scatter'd, and to bear
The converts to their God in Palestine,
Be to thy care intrusted? Sanctify
Thyself for the high mission, and become
In purpose, as in fact, heav'n's minister.

Say, shall thy red-cross standard wave sublime
O'er golden Inde, and Satan's idol-holds
Feel not its influence† ? Still the blazing pyres

* Isaiah, 18th chapter. The reader is referred to Bishop Horsley's Commentary on that very mysterious part of holy writ.

† The Author disclaims having any intention, by these reflections, to excite government to subdue paganism in our Indian possessions by coercive measures. It is rightly argued,

Proclaim where superstition immolates
The self-devoted. Still in Ganges flood
Besotted myriads seek for health, and life,
And pardon, and beatitude. On earth
The Fakir lies, and still, with eyelids shorn,
Looks at the sun on his meridian throne,
And deems his tortures virtue. Britain, say,
Where are thy temples, where thy white-rob'd priests,
Thy bloodless altars, and thy sacred creeds?

that as we are not sufficiently powerful to effect such a design, God has not allowed us the means of rooting out idolatry. But what every serious person must deeply lament is, that in our numerous and wealthy settlements, no provision, or at best only a very scanty one, is made for supporting Christianity among our own countrymen, or for propagating its sublime truths among the natives, by giving them a chance of conversion from beholding the beauty of holiness in our public worship, and in the lives of Christians. That the latter effect of our religion is not more prevalent must be referred to the fault of individuals. What is required of the ruling powers is, to found a religious establishment at every settlement, and to patronize the translation of the holy scriptures into all the native languages.

Hast thou no true ablution to despoil
Ganges of worship? no pure rite, no prayer,
No adjuration, from his trance of pain
To rouse the Fakir? no consoling chaunt
To tell the widow her Redeemer lives,
And snatch her from the flames? O teach those groves,
Rich with redundant beauty, fragrance, fruit,
And shade salubrious, all the swelling pomp
Of Asiatic foliage, teach those groves
To echo other sounds than Bramah's name,
And other incantations! Be the songs
Of Sion heard from fertile Malabar
To sandy Arcot, to the beauteous shores
Of rich Orissa, and Bengal, profuse
Of all life needs, save that for which we live.
O spread those echoes o'er the peaceful seas,
Peopled with barks innumerous! Let them sound
In every spicy isle, and palm-crown'd bay,
Where commerce spreads her tent, or stays her oar.
Wherever waves thy banner, bid it shade

The house of God; where'er thy tongue is heard,
O let it, like an angel's trumpet, tell
Messiah's kingdom of good-will and peace,
Friendship and truth to man; to God the rites
Of firm obedience, gratitude, and love.
Exalt the full hosanna, till it soars
High as the lofty mountains of the moon,
And wakens Afric's savage genius, there
In gloomy state reposing; bid him yield
His bloody banquets, and his demon-gods;
Call on the tawny Moor to lay aside
That sensual creed which binds him to afflict,
And hate, the Christian. Teach Canadian tribes,
Who wander vast Columbia's northern wilds,
To hope a better heav'n than that they paint,
Areskoni's gift beyond the lakes, compos'd
Of forests stor'd with game, and sunny plains.
But chief, O guilt! O grief! lasting disgrace
To thy renown to say, 'tis yet undone!
Teach those whom Afric's vices, or thine own,

Have made thy captives—those who ceaseless toil
Beneath a burning sun, to swell thy marts
With produce exquisite; those most forlorn,
Whom thou hast reft of country, and disjoin'd
From nature's ties; O teach those men of woes,
The God thou worshippest. So when they sit
Their labour ended, musing on the plains
Of Guinea, or on Benin's cooling palms,
Till sorrow kindles vengeance, and they dare
To brave, by crime, the tortures which they deem
Will send them to the realms so lov'd, so mourn'd—
Visions more mild may rise, list'ning the themes
Of heavenly mercy, and eternal rest
To deep affliction. Down their glossy cheeks
Shall stream the tears of piety and joy,
Dews of an ardent heart, producing now
Far nobler passions than revenge and hate.

O Britain! cleanse thy glory from this stain,
Of nations most illustrious! Blush to hear

That Lusitanian and Castilian kings*
First labour'd in their colonies to fix
The canker'd scion they mistaking deem'd
The tree of life; whilst thou, in whose bless'd soil
It grows redundant, check'd by counsels cold,
Selfish, or atheistical, hast giv'n
To the true plant no culture, nor convey'd
Its fruit to distant regions. Hangs the sword
Of desolation o'er thy head, scarce staid
From hewing down thy greatness? Are thy sons
Torn from the walks of peace, thy treasures drain'd,
And thy vast genius circumscrib'd with laws
Abhorrent to thy nature, but impos'd
By the stern times, and wilt thou not inquire
How thou hast sinn'd to Heav'n, nor weep th' offence
Of cold indifference in a sacred cause?

* Dr. Robertson, in several parts of his History of America, describes the care which the Spanish government took to found and endow religious worship in the countries which they conquered.

Yet, Britain, know, whether thy hallow'd hand
Shall usher in the dawn, or, fearful still,
Curtain its beams, the sun of truth shall rise,
Shine from the orient, light those scatter'd isles,
Which, like green emeralds, sparkle on the breast
Of the Pacific and Atlantic seas,
Blazing from Greenland to the southern pole,
O'er Apalachian mountains, on the top
Of Andes, on the high Riphœan rocks,
O'er the long chain which shoots from Caucasus
To sea-wash'd Anadir; where India's hills
Stop the monsoon's strong current, to the heights
Of Ethiopia, where the Nile collects
Her waters inexhaustible, shall sound
The echoing lauds of universal man
Hymning one common God, the God of peace,
And purity, and fellowship, and love.

Then shall the anxious mother, when she yields
Her child to distant realms, lose half the fears

Which now oppress her soul. No barbarous shore
Will then be found, where lurks the cannibal,
Or savage, who in sport his arrow aims,
And deems a murder pastime. Shipwreck then
Shall lose its adventitious miseries;
Nor shall the wretch whom the vex'd sea hath spar'd
Find man a sterner enemy. No more,
When filial piety, with zeal untir'd,
From port to port, from sea to sea, explores
A father's fate, the Troubridge of those times,
Shall terror ask how died he? Sunk the chief
In his own Blenheim, vanquish'd by the storm?
Lies he in pomp marine, ingulph'd beneath
The element he lov'd, from whence he reap'd
The harvest of renown? or found his keel
A dreary island, where a club or stone
Fell'd him whom Gallia's hostile fires had spar'd
In his long glorious course? Then never more
Shall female terror sicken at the tale
Of sack'd Grenada's massacre, nor shrink

At the wild ravage of a negro war,
Wasting Domingo's fertile paradise;
When dying infants, writhing on the pike,
Shriek'd to their lifeless sires. Humanity
From east to west shall triumph; nor shall man
Turn tempter, and to foul rebellion prompt
Young inexperience, fanning till they flame
The fires of lust, intemperance, and hate:
Fraud shall not glory o'er the simple fool,
Trapp'd in the snare he deck'd with gaudy flowers.

Thus, the worst enemies of man fang-drawn,
And exil'd, like the lion, from the haunts
Of social life, the mother shall entrust
Her child to scenes unknown, with precepts strange
From those she now enjoins, bidding him nurse
The glow of confidence, and give the dole
Of liberality, ere need resolves
To ask his aid, trusting his future wants
To friends as prompt and pitying. "For friends now

Hang ripe on every tree*, and every friend
Is sound at core. Self has resign'd the throne
To warm benevolence, whose first decree
Hath banish'd guile. His station candour fills;
Mercy and truth are met, discoursing high
On universal happiness; and peace
Gives righteousness the kiss of spousal love.

"Go forth, my child, the adder lurks not now
In the way-side to sting thy heedless foot;
Nor does the hideous vampyre envy, flap
With wing obscene, the offering genius bears
To immortality. Fear not to smile;
Smiles are not now misconstru'd. Loose the reins
To innocence and joy; for innocence
And joy are the competitors who drive
Beside thy chariot, with fraternal zeal,
To hail thy triumph, or to aid thy fall.

* "Young friends grow not on every tree,
Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core."

The world is chang'd; 'tis Christian now; each land
Blazes in gospel-glory. Not as late,
Part in deep night, in twilight shadows part,
Part by false meteors wilder'd, and where shone
The splendour brightest, by the Christian shrine,
Mammon, and Belial, and lewd Chemosh rais'd
With other names their idol-shrines and groves.
These are the times of which the golden harps
Of prophecy, with many a symbol high,
Their rapturous idylls sung; the distant view
Warm'd hoary wisdom with seraphic fire,
Bursting in symphonies sublime. The seers
Beheld Messiah's kingdom, Sharon's rose,
The cedar and the peaceful olive join'd
Flourish in barren sands by confluent streams,
That burst spontaneous where no ravenous beast
Could lurk, no poisonous serpent coil his folds
To spring on man. But o'er green pastures, strew'd
With flowers, o'er-arch'd with foliage, kings and queens,
As nursing parents, led the church of God,

Singing one song, array'd in spotless robes
Of sanctitude, and journeying safe to heaven."

Assist, ye mothers, by your care, the toils
Of statesmen and of warriors. Speed the time
When man reclaim'd, and liege to God, no more
Shall need the sword of justice, or of war.
Provide, by early labour, for your age
Its best retreat, a bower secure and warm,
By your own branches shelter'd, there to sit,
And ruminate on former days; t' improve
The present hour, and plume your flagging wings
For your celestial journey, then discern'd
Through a straight vista. When your feeble hands
Can minister no longer to your wants;
When the faint knees relax, and the dull ear
Hears not the charmer; when the ray divine
Of beauty lights not the dull eye, and taste
Palls on unflavour'd sameness; every sense
Shall be supplied, if filial gratitude

Repays the mighty loan maternal love
Lent to its helpless years; and thou shalt lean
On its kind arm, nor fear thy tottering steps,
Nor want thy sightless eyes. What tho' renown
To thee is silent, and the world no more
Invites thee to her gorgeous feasts, content
That thou hast shar'd them, leave them to the young
To banquet, and, as thou hast done, retire.
Sublimer joys are thine; thy children's love,
Their modest fortunes, and their fair renown,
To thee more musical than ought beneath
The chime melodious of according stars.
Died the strong Rhodian, father* of delight,
When his three sons, crown'd in th' Olympic games,
Woke the Pindaric lyre? In holier bliss
The Christian mother dies, when round her bed
Her kneeling progeny, with pious prayers,
Waft her pure soul to heaven. On every face
She turns a parting glance, attempts to raise

* Diagoras.

Her stiffen'd hands in benedictions kind;
And the last accents inarticulate,
Which tremble on her falling lip, are sounds
Of thankfulness and blessing. Fare thee well!
Thy labours now are ended, and thy joys
Largely expatiate. The mysterious veil,
Drawn by Omniscience o'er the world unseen,
Allows the Muse faint glimpse of what thou art
In thine eternal mansion. Yet, if still
Man's nobler aims rise unsubdu'd by death;
If the calm sage, who studied nature here,
Pursues her wonders through ten thousand worlds;
If he who rul'd an empire under God,
Now rules a star, still will the mother's shade
Attend her darlings with benignant care,
And in a guardian angel's sacred form *,
Shall perfect love full consummation find.

* The employment here assigned to the maternal spirit is confessed to be founded on a hypothesis which has no support from scripture. We know, however, too little of the nature

Come, pensive Muse, resume thy harp, and close
Thy strains with consolation. Paint the soul
Refin'd from earthly frailty, and inspir'd
With clear foretastes of glory. See it dry
The tears of love, who o'er the clay-cold corpse
Delights to bend, closing with reverend touch
The glassy eyes, composing the writh'd limbs,
And in the plain habiliments of death
Investing ruin'd nature. At the grave
The parent shade attends the mournful train,
And calls attention, while religious hope
Sings jubilant. In poverty, in wo,
In sickness, in reproach, in thy green path,
Prosperity, on honour's slippery rock,
In every trial, various as the aims,

of spirits, peremptorily to decide that such an office is *impossible* for glorified human beings to perform, or that they may not, in some future stage of existence, become ministering spirits, like angels. It is hoped that it will not be deemed too fanciful to conclude a poem dictated by maternal feeling, with a suggestion which must often have occurred to a mother's heart.

And characters, and destinies of man,
The faithful guardian watches; and, perchance,
Obtains permission oft to ward the bolt
Of threaten'd evil, or in gentle dreams
To whisper admonition or reproof;
And when they struggle through death's vale, to stand
A beckoning angel on the shores of bliss,
Cheering its fainting progeny with strains
Most rapturous, the sound of harps divine,
Chanting the wonderous change from dying pangs
To immortality, to heav'n, and God.

Happy the mother, happier than the bound
Of human thought can fathom, who, when death
Resigns his empire, from the grave shall rise,
With all her race beatified, and soar
Joyful to meet her Judge. Then, with deep awe,
Profound humility, and trust divine
In his unbounded mercy, trembling speak
The words he utter'd, " Lord, of those thou gav'st

To thy weak handmaid to instruct in truth,
And guide to glory, I have lost not one *;
On earth we were thy servants, and now come,
In thine own realm to serve thee evermore."

* St. John, 17th chapter, 11th verse. "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost."

THE END.

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